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[THE RAVINE.]

A YOUNG GIRL FROM THE COUNTRY.

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Author of "The Queen of Night," "In Spite of the World," &c.

CHAPTER XIX.

It was a deep and darksome dell
Where shadows on the still leaves fell,
And sunlight glinted never.

Anon.

On the morning after the receipt of Granby Saville's letter, Clara Mansfield came down into the breakfast-parlour with a pale face and weary eyes—plain signs of a long night of unrest.

"You look ill, my dear," said Mrs. Mansfield, in much concern.

Clara smiled.

"I must not expect to bear the change of climate without some inconvenience," she said; "however, as my head burns and I feel languid, I am about to propose a drive over to the ruins of Lamborough Castle."

Gabriel's eyes met hers.

The glance expressed much.

"I consent on one condition," said Mrs. Mansfield, laughing.

"What is that?" asked Clara.

"That you make up the party to exclude me," added the old lady; "you and Louisa, and Henry with Mr. Desney, will just fill the landau."

Clara could not have wished for more.

"Very well, mamma," she said languidly, "just as you please. Let us go early and be back to lunch."

As soon as breakfast was over, Clara approached Gabriel Desney.

"Gabriel," she said, in a low voice, "I have arranged this drive because I wish to speak with you."

Desney's face expressed annoyance.

"I hope we are not to have a renewal of the scene of yesterday, then," he answered; "otherwise, I shall most certainly decline the honour of a conversation."

"Louisa is watching us," said Clara, "so I can say

no more now. What I have to tell you is something which will make you my friend, not my enemy."

Desney's heart bounded.

"Good," he said, "at the ruins, then, I will walk with you for a time, and leave Louisa with Henry. This is well," he murmured, as Clara moved away; "she has reconsidered her decision and will consent to my compact!"

In the course of the next hour the carriage was brought round to the door, the four young people entered it and the horses started off at a rapid pace for Lamborough Castle.

They were a merry party.

Each one of them seemed in high spirits—none more so than Clara.

The colour had returned to her cheeks—the elasticity to her form—the brightness to her eye. An hour's calm thought had done more than could have been effected by months' doctoring and rushings from one sea-side to another. Mrs. Mansfield had imagined her to be bodily ill. Her illness and her health were but the oppression and expansion of her heart.

When they arrived at the ruins, Clara took Gabriel's arm, leaving Henry with Louisa, who pouted at the circumstance, but attributed it to the secret plan of her sister's, the object and result of which she so much dreaded to understand.

"Gabriel," said Clara, after a few moments' silence, "I have reconsidered my decision of yesterday."

A smile of deep meaning wreathed itself over Desney's lips.

"That is very discreet and sensible of you," he said, "and what do you propose?"

"That we should keep our secrets," she answered.

"I will keep yours if you keep mine. I preserve the love of Granby Saville—the love of Louisa!"

"Very well," he answered, "very well chosen. It will, I assure you, be the better for both of us."

"I think it may for me, though I fear that I am sacrificing my sister. Granby Saville will be here in a few days. I wish to understand that from you I have nothing to fear."

Gabriel took her hand and pressed it.

"I pledge you my word, neither say nor do

anything to prejudice you. From this moment the past shall be forgotten and we will live for the future."

"It is a compact, then, between us," said Clara; "but tell me how was it that you came as tutor to my brother and remained here knowing they were my relations?"

"I fell in love with your sister," replied Gabriel, with the coolest effrontery in the world, "at a party. I found out her name and her home, and had the good fortune to obtain the post of tutor to your brother Henry. I knew you as Clara Hume, although you married me under the name of Mansfield; and although the names were the same, I declare to you that until I saw you I had no idea that you and my wife were the same person. I heard of you from your family as Clara Mansfield. I knew you were in Australia, but I believed you had fled to India with Captain Winter, and I could not conceive that you would return home as a single woman."

"Did they then never once mention the name of the Humes?"

"No—not once."

At this moment Henry came up.

"Do you see the thicket yonder, Clara?" he cried.

"Yes."

"Well," he continued, with all the air of one who is about to afford important information, "if you will come with me, I will show you a wonderful place."

The pair followed him until he led them to the other side of a thickly-wooded copse.

As you approached, you could see nothing but a green, smooth, velvety lawn, crowned by dense trees; but, suddenly, ere you were prepared for it, you found yourself on the edge of a deep and dangerous ravine.

Clara drew back in alarm.

"This is scarcely a joke, Henry," she cried, somewhat petulantly. "I might have fallen over."

"Not while we were with you," said he.

She leaned over and looked down, holding Desney's hand.

He looked also, and as they raised them, their eyes met.



At that instant their thoughts had been the same, and they knew it.

Each had thought of the consequences of an accident to the other—what an obstacle would have been cleared from the path—what a weight from the heart—what a blight from life!

Clara shuddered, and Gabriel Desney turned pale. "What a horrible place!" she cried, as she turned round.

Then she started, pointing meanwhile to a little narrow, winding path.

"Where does that lead to?" she asked.

"To Lorneby."

"What," she exclaimed, "this is an open path, used by travellers, and yet this precipice is left undefended? Why, in Australia there would be a murder every night!"

"Ah! you see we are not so blood-thirsty here in England," cried Louisa, who had now recovered her spirits, as she was once more in the company of Gabriel Desney, "we don't have any murders in our country."

After a short wandering in and about the ruins, they returned to the carriage.

But there was little conversation, except between Louisa and Gabriel; for the sight of that deep and dark ravine seemed to have made an impression upon Clara's mind, and caused a settled and irremovable gloom.

That evening Louisa came into her bedchamber.

The young girl was for the moment transformed into the woman, and her cold, firm manner, when she spoke, much astonished Clara Mansfield.

"Clara," she said, as she sat down by the toilet-table, before which her sister was arranging the magnificent folds of her hair, and looking very beautiful in her negligé attire. "Clara, I fear you are deceiving me."

Clara turned sharply, and eyed her sister.

"Why, Louisa, what is it you mean? In what have I deceived you?"

"You have warned me against Gabriel Desney because you love him, yourself?"

Clara laughed lightly.

"I love Gabriel Desney? why I know nothing of him to make me love him. I fear I have wronged him, that is all. I warned you against him, but I am afraid I said too much. If you love him, I see now no reason why you should not allow him to continue his attentions."

Louisa's face brightened.

"I am glad to hear you say that, dear Clara," she cried, "the more so, because I began to be convinced that you loved him."

"You need think of that no more then," returned Clara, with a smile, "for I too have a secret. I love another."

Louisa's face brightened.

"Who is this you love?" she asked, as she leaned over her sister, and passing her arm round her white neck, kissed her lovingly, "is it anyone I know?"

"No dear, it is not, at least you have only heard his name. It is Granby Saville, the young man I met in Australia, and who came home with us in the Rodney. He is coming here in a few days. So you see, dear Louisa, you have no rival in me."

There was a silence for a few moments.

Then, after contemplating her sister for a few moments, Clara said:

"It is a rather dangerous thing to give advice to young ladies, when they are in love; for they are apt to forget that things are told them in confidence. I should like to say a few words to you, if you will promise you will keep them in your own heart, and reveal them to no one—more especially Gabriel Desney."

"I promise you," said Louisa.

"I have already told you," returned Clara, "that I regret having spoken so strongly to you about Mr. Desney. But I still persist in one thing. Unless you love him so much that a rupture would be a lasting sorrow in your life, struggle against your affection, for he is not the man to make you happy."

"Oh! yes he is. He is good, kind, intellectual."

Clara smiled bitterly.

"His intellect is your very danger," she said; "but remember, what I have said is all that I shall ever say on the subject, and I only exact one promise."

"What is that?"

"That you will delay your marriage for at least a year."

Louisa crimsoned.

"You do not, surely, dream of marrying him yet?" asked Clara anxiously.

"His uncle," returned Louisa, "is not expected to live many weeks, and when he comes into his property, Gabriel will ask my mother's consent."

"That is like Desney," murmured Clara, "building his happiness on the ruin or death of others. Well, well, Louisa; after all, this uncle may not die off just yet. So, until he does, I will say no more on the subject."

A few days after, Granby Saville arrived at Elleraby Grange.

A letter from Mrs. Mansfield, written at Clara's request, had summoned him: and he came as a welcome guest.

"What has changed you so, my darling?" he said, when they were left alone together. "What have I done to deserve this most delightful alteration in your feelings? I cannot ascribe it to the fact of my prospects having materially bettered."

Clara smiled archly.

"It is attributable to that," she said. "I knew well that if you came hither as a suitor to my hand without fortune, you would be rejected by my friends. The great love I bear you would never have compensated for the misery which would have been entailed upon us. Now all is for the best. Your change of fortune has cleared away all obstacles in our path, and I can confess your love is returned."

Men, in positions of this kind, are not apt to reason much.

Otherwise Granby Saville would scarcely have accepted Clara's flimsy excuse.

He was, however, delighted at her words—enraptured to find himself beloved and gave himself no time to think. He pressed her to his heart, kissed her lips with all the ardour of his impassioned nature, and in the fulness of his great love, believed he had secured his happiness for ever.

Had he been able to fathom Clara's thoughts when she retired to her room on the first night of his arrival, he would have shuddered at the terrible danger ahead of him, and would have fled from the house as one would flee from a city of the plague.

Clara, on her part, was overwhelmed by a fearful joy.

"Ah! Gabriel Desney," she murmured, as she stood in all the glory of her triumphant beauty before her Psyche glass, "the woman you have despised and outraged will soon be your master. I have secured my happiness, and can now tell you in secret. Louisa may love you, and you may enjoy your dream for a while; but she shall never be your wife and victim."

What could she mean?

How, when she had promised to suffer this union to take place, could she intend to foil her betrayer? If at the last moment she told her story, would she not still lose the love of Granby Saville?

CHAPTER XX

She came—she saw—her plotting heart misgave her:
Was it his face—his voice that made her tremble?
Or her own fearful thoughts?

Managers.

From the night on which Madame Delaume had concealed herself in Milton Conyers' bedchamber, and had seen the poison placed in the bottle by the marchioness, things had changed strangely in the house.

Madame Delaume herself moved about more than usual, and assumed an air of greater cheerfulness.

The marchioness's health became better, and that, too, suddenly. Colour was restored to his cheeks—his step became firmer, his voice clearer, and he was able to walk in the air.

The marchioness, on the other hand, was downcast and listless; so nervous, too, that she started at the least sound, and would have screamed in terror had any one suddenly placed his hand upon her shoulder.

She knew that some one was working against her, and she felt convinced that Madame Delaume was that one. Yet what could she do? There was no reason for sending her away, no pretext, however shallow, and so she was compelled to bear her presence, in spite of the deadly hatred growing up in her heart.

Again and again she wrote to John Shadow, but received no answer.

What could it mean?

Was he deserting her?

Was he leaving her to tread alone the dark and gloomy road to which he had led her?

The thought made her mad, and she cast it from her in terror.

At length, wearied by constant waiting—dreading that she had been abandoned by the instigator and participator of her crime—seeing herself foiled in her fatal purpose by one whose opposition she had never dreamed of, and whose motives she could not fathom, she went out one night alone, and made her way to the house where Shadow resided.

The man at the door of the chambers was a gruff sort of individual, and not seeing anything particularly ladylike or out of the way in the closely-veiled woman who presented herself with a timid knock, answered her question somewhat rudely.

"Are you quite sure Mr. Courtenay is not in?" she said.

"Quite sure—ain't been here for some time."

"He still keeps on his chambers?"

"Yes."

"And has his letters?"

"Yes. His friend Captain de Grey takes them to him. The captain stays here sometimes, and I rather think he's up-stairs now with a young gentleman from abroad."

The marchioness started.

Could this be the newly-discovered heir of whom John Shadow had spoken?

She rejected the idea at once, however.

Was not Shadow her friend and his enemy?

"Here!" she cried, turning to the man and giving him a sovereign, "take this and let me go up. I wish to go up alone, remember—I have a fancy to go in unannounced."

"You know the captain, then?" he said with a grin, as he took the sovereign and weighed it on the end of his finger.

"Yes—yes, I know him," she answered, as she passed by him and rapidly ascended the stairs.

She had never asked in what part of the house Shadow had his chambers, but she had no sooner reached the first floor than she was arrested by hearing his voice.

"The fellow has deceived me," she murmured; "he is at home. Who can that be with him? It is the voice of a young man."

She looked around her to see if there were any spot where she could overhear the conversation without being observed.

The door of the adjoining room was open.

She approached it and peered in.

A narrow streak of light crossed the floor, showing that the rooms joined, and that the door of communication was ajar.

Noislessly as a spirit she glided in and listened.

John Shadow's voice spoke again.

"You see, Granby," he said, "the time is nearly come for action. The documents to prove your identity are all arranged, and there is one link only wanted. That link I shall not be long in supplying. The marchioness trembled."

"What can this mean?" she murmured; "he is betraying me, and betraying the marchioness as well."

She rose from the half-kneeling posture she had assumed, and peeped through the door.

There sat Granby Saville in the fulness of his manly beauty.

The marchioness feared him as she gazed upon him, feared his frank, bright, clear eyes, his broad, open brow, his whole air of confidence and sincerity.

"Such a son Conyers will gladly welcome," she murmured; "the end must come before he sees him."

Then her eyes turned involuntarily towards the spot whence Shadow's voice had proceeded.

But she saw him not.

In the chair, was a gentleman with bushy whiskers and moustache, and somewhat thin hair; dressed in rather a foreign fashion, and much broader than John Shadow in figure, and apparently in face.

She listened for him to speak, and when he did, she almost uttered an exclamation of fear.

It was John Shadow, but the disguise was so perfect that no one could have detected him.

"There is some jugglery here," she murmured; "I must listen to their plans, that I may defeat them."

"I shall be glad when the day arrives which will restore me to my home and my father," said Granby Saville; "I only wish there were a mother, too, to welcome me."

"The only mother you will find there, is your worst enemy," replied Shadow; "but, by the way, as to your mother, let me say a few words. I think I have told you that your mother died from home?"

"You have."

"I will tell you why. One of the visitors at Milton Hall, where your father resided was a Colonel Macfarren, a handsome, dashing fellow, and your father suspected that your mother became attached to him."

Granby Saville started up and paced the room hastily.

"Tell me no more!" he cried. "I will hear no evil of my mother."

Shadow smiled.

"Nay, my young friend," he said, "be not too hasty. Your father went not by suspicion alone. He had the evidence of a third person."

"Who was he?"

"John Shadow."

"Bah!" cried Granby, "what is his evidence? Do you think I will believe my mother guilty, upon the evidence of a man like Shadow, who, if report speaks aright, is a reprobate, if not a thorough-paced villain."

Shadow winced.

"The young rascal little thinks he is talking to his own father!" he muttered.

"Well, well," he said, aloud; "a man is what the world makes him. Shadow may not have been a villain then. At any rate, your father thought the evidence so strong, that he suggested to your mother



the propriety of leaving her home, and she did so. She died down in Yorkshire, and a short time after he married again. This second wife of his is accused of having been instrumental in your disappearance."

"Treacherous villain!" murmured Lady Isabel. "I have much to thank her for then," said Granby Saville.

"Much!" muttered Shadow dreamily.

Saville thought a moment.

"I suppose," he said, "that I have time to pay my visit to the Mansfields?"

"When do you wish to start?"

"To-morrow."

"And to stay how long?"

"A fortnight, or as long, indeed, as you can spare me. I do not see that I am much use here."

"No truly! You can go without in any way impeding my movements."

He then rose.

"I am going round to Merryweather's," he said; "can you amuse yourself here for an hour?"

"Oh, yes! I can think and read, and think, until you come. I tell you what, De Grey, however, I'm getting mightily wearied of this game of hide-and-seek, and shall be glad to show my face in the daylight once more, if it is as a beggar."

In a few moments John Shadow, or, as Granby Saville knew him, Captain de Grey, had left the room, and Lady Isabel heard the street-door close behind him.

Then she rose from her kneeling posture and entered the room.

Granby Saville started up in wild amazement when he saw her gliding up to him.

"Sit down quietly," she said, "I have something of importance to tell you."

Granby repeated himself.

"Well, I like mysteries," he said, "but I declare I'm getting tired of them. Since I've been in England I have had nothing else."

"I have come to clear up these mysteries," said Lady Isabel. "What does that man call himself who has just left the room?"

"Captain de Grey."

"It is false; he is John Shadow."

Saville turned deadly pale.

"Your proofs!" he cried.

"Ask the man himself."

"I will," said Saville; "but if it were so—what then?"

"He is luring you on to your destruction—he is blinding you with a false hope—he is endeavouring to foist you upon a noble family as heir to honours and fortune. But it is not so. The heir is dead. You will be discovered, treated as an impostor, and inevitable ruin will be your portion."

Granby was amazed by her earnestness—overwhelmed by the dread visions her words conjured up—the hopeless, dreary future they substituted for the bright prospects just opening to him.

"Who am I, then," he asked gloomily, "if I am not Ralph Conyers?"

"Your name is Granby Shadow—you are that man's son."

Granby grasped her arm as in a vice.

"Woman!" he cried, "who are you, who thus bring me tidings of fearful sorrow? Who are you, who tell me that I am the son of one whom I have seen mentioned in the public prints as a villain of the deepest die? I have a fearful risk to run. Upon the truth or falsehood of what you say depends the happiness of more than one heart. Who are you?"

"One who has an interest in you—more I will not, cannot tell."

Granby rose and paced the room.

"I will not believe it," he said; "if you were speaking the truth you would tell me your name, and fear not to cast aside this disguise."

Lady Isabel drew him back to his seat, and said imploringly:

"Oh! indeed—indeed I have spoken the truth. Ask this man—confront him with his own deeds, and he will not dare to deny them. Believe me, not only your own ruin, but the ruin of many others would result from your following up this fatal thread of wrong."

"I will do as you ask me," said Granby, eagerly. "I will charge him with having deceived me. But what then? Am I to cast aside my inheritance because the man who has led me to it is evil?"

"No—no; but it is not your inheritance," cried the marchioness.

"For that I have but your word, madam," returned Saville Granby, but with much respect. "I do not presume for one moment to charge you with any wilful untruth; but I *must* have proofs before I can cast aside all my fondly cherished hopes. I have strong reasons for surmising who you are; and if my suspicions are correct, of course you are the person most interested in keeping from me my title and my

fortune. Therefore, madam, give me proofs ere you ask me for my belief."

Lady Isabel answered not.

"Believe me, madam," continued Granby Saville, "believe me that, had I nothing to live for, I should scarcely mind giving up this fortune and title to Reginald Conyers, who has been led to expect them. But I have something to live for—my happiness in life depends on my obtaining these honours, and not till the last straw floats away from me will I consent to glide down again into the wide ocean of obscurity."

"I can say no more," returned the Marchioness of Castleton; "I can say no more. As to your suspicions in regard to me, I care not. Were I to unveil myself at the present moment it would affect the case neither in one way nor the other."

"Then why do you not do so, madam?" interrupted, Granby, eagerly.

"Because it is my whim to remain unknown," answered Isabel, "but remember the person whom you have been taught to regard as your father—I allude of course to the Marquis of Castleton—is fully prepared for the trial you intend to confer upon him."

"What mean you, madam?"

"I will speak plainly then, since I begin to fear you are not a dupe but a conspirator. The marquis is aware that an attempt will be made to pass off a spurious heir upon him. Thus prepared, he will be a difficult person to deceive, and you will find your game a losing one."

Granby Saville rose once more.

"Madam," he said, "this passes endurance. My respect for you as a woman—as one belonging to that sex which gave me a mother—precludes the expression of the feelings which your insulting words have produced. But I can bear no more, Lady Castleton, for so I believe you to be. Go in peace, but let us not meet again, until we do so in the house of my ancestors."

The pride and dignity with which these words were uttered seemed to impress Lady Isabel painfully.

"If I did not know that Ralph Conyers was dead," she murmured, "I should certainly believe that this was my husband's son."

She threw aside her veil.

"What if I am Lady Castleton!" she cried. "What is that to you? How can you prove that I am here? But enough of that. I am Lady Castleton. I am the mother of Reginald Conyers; and as his mother, I defend his rights. I tell you that you are the son of John Shadow—an assassin—a returned convict; and that for you, no child of mine shall suffer."

With these words she drew her veil again over her face and swept from the room.

Granby Saville stood transfixed with horror at her words, and tried not to prevent her exit.

She glided, therefore, noiselessly down the stairs, passed the porter, who was fast asleep, and let herself out into the street.

"If that man were really Ralph Conyers," she said, "I should tremble for my imposture. But it cannot be. Ralph is dead, and this imposture has, after all, no more substantiality than a nightmare."

CHAPTER XXI

And she was gone—where?—none could tell.

Where she had been, a shadow fell;

For none who knew her failed to weep

And mourn her sudden loss. Crabbe.

"Bob Trenniker will watch," that theatrical worthy had said, and he did so.

Neither Mangles Worsop nor John Shadow knew his form or face, and it was an easier business, therefore, for him to perform the part of an amateur detective, than it would have been for Jabez Laurence.

There were grave difficulties in the way, however.

In the first place, Mrs. Littleton, the landlady, was not a philanthropist, and, had she been so in heart, the shallowness of her pocket would have counterbalanced her sentiment.

Therefore, for what she supplied, she expected to be paid; and, knowing this, poor Jabez began seriously to be alarmed. His slender stock would soon be exhausted, and what should they do then?

Cicely Crowe soon recovered from her "drowning" as Jabez called it; and restored to health and beauty as she was, by a few days' rest, she became the life and soul of the house.

"I never did have my place so full as this 'ere before," said Mrs. Littleton to Bob Trenniker; "and I don't perfect to take in drowned people; but that young woman is a good sort, and I shouldn't like to see her hurted."

Bob assented with a grunt.

He was evidently cogitating.

That evening, when Bob Trenniker came back from the theatre, which he did rather early, that is to say, about eleven, the party met over an apology for a supper.

Cicely looked beautiful as ever, though her eyes were

heavy with sadness; while Jabez seemed a prey to some unusual excitement.

"I tell you what it is, Bob!" he cried suddenly, nearly choking himself with a piece of bread, "I tell you what it is—this 'ere must end."

"All's well that ends well," said Bob, tragically.

"Your play-going stories is all right in their way, I dessey," said Jabez petulantly, "but what I means is this, we can't live upon nothing, and in another day or two all my money will be gone."

Mrs. Littleton shook her head, and looked distressed. "Times is very hard, and purvisions has to be paid for," she said, with the tone of an oracle, "otherwise, young man—"

She did not finish the speech, but shook her head again, as people do, by way of completion.

Jabez understood her.

"That's just what it is, Mrs. Littleton," he cried. "I don't expect no one to keep me for nothing; but I can't find anything to do, and that's a fact."

"Jabez," said Bob Trenniker, "I've been thinking."

"The play—the play's the thing." "I can get you a place as call-boy at the theatre, if you like to come—you won't get much; but still it will do to keep you and Cicely."

Cicely flushed crimson.

"Why should Jabez support me?" she cried. "No Mr. Trenniker, I must look out for something to do. I cannot live here in idleness. My poor father made a great error in sending me up to London; but now I am here, and am alone in the world, I must do something for a living."

"Would you like the stage, too?" said Bob.

He had no idea beyond the stage.

Cicely smiled.

"What could I do," she said. "I know nothing about it."

"It doesn't come naturally," returned Bob. "It has to be learnt, the same as arithmetic. However, there's no harm in waiting a bit. But first of all, Miss Crowe, you will have to leave this house."

Cicely gazed at him in surprise and alarm.

"Where am I to go then?" she cried.

"Well, that I've not clearly thought of," said Bob, "but it must be done. I've been watching, as I promised I would; and I've seen many queer characters prowling about here. Some of them, I think, are police in disguise; if so, we shall have to give you up, because your father made Mangles Worsop your guardian for the time being; you are not of age, and we can't show any right over you."

Nobody but Bob Trenniker had thought of this, and every one started as he spoke. Jabez felt his heart quake within him, and Cicely turned deadly pale.

"I will go at once," she said, "anywhere to escape them."

It will be as well to go to-morrow," returned Bob, "as soon as the dusk of the evening sets in."

The words had scarcely left his lips, when a loud knock was heard at the door.

"That's them!" cried Jabez, "I know it is."

Bob Trenniker's mind was ever active.

"Go," cried he pointing to the back door, "go, Miss Crowe, and you, Jabez; hide out in the garden. Clear away their plates, Mrs. Littleton, and I'll see these people."

Bob's orders were soon carried out, not, however, before a second knock, louder than the first, shook the outer door.

He then rose, and slowly approached the entrance.

"Who is this," he cried, as he opened the door wide, "who comes to disturb quiet people in the dead of night?"

"I am a detective officer," said the man who stood there.

He was a man of middle height, with a coat buttoned up to the chin, a very stiff shirt collar, and a shining hat. He affected a gold-headed cane, and wore patent leather boots, yet he did not look like a gentleman.

"I am a detective officer," he said, "and I am in search of a fugitive."

"Don't live here," cried Bob.

"Chaff is all very well in its way and in its proper place," said the detective quietly, "but as I am on business, I can't afford to waste my time. I came here to find a young girl named Cicely Crowe, and a young man named Jabez Laurence. The girl was brought in by the young man, after she tried to commit suicide."

"Oh!" cried Bob Trenniker, "if you're looking after her, I can give you some information. In the first place, she did not attempt suicide, but fell into the water; in the second place she left this house yesterday. If you will come inside, where it is pleasanter than standing here, I will tell you all about it."

The detective entered, followed Bob Trenniker into the parlour, and sat down.

"Which do you take, gin or brandy?" said Bob, hospitably, while Mrs. Littleton gazed at him in undisguised alarm.

"Brandy, if you please," returned the officer.
"What can he mean by giving this man drink, keeping him in here, and those two young people out perishing in the cold?" thought the landlady, "he'll stay here an hour."

Meanwhile Bob brewed the grog calmly.
"I've got to tell a fib," he thought; "it'll only be a white lie, but while I am telling it, it might as well be one to answer the purpose."

After this sophisticated, he pushed the glass over, in a friendly manner, towards the police officer, saying:

"Well, as I said, these people are gone out of this house."

The detective took out his note-book.

"When did they go?"

"Yesterday."

"Where?"

"I don't know, but I think it was some place called Thornton."

The officer smiled.

"Ah!" he said, "I begin to see daylight."

"That's lucky for you," thought Bob, "for in my opinion, you're in a pretty considerable fog, and will be in a worse before you've done. Well," he added aloud, "I'm glad of that. But I've got more to tell. A young man came here yesterday morning; and had a long interview with this Jabez Laurence; then he saw Miss Crowe, and in the evening he came and fetched them away in a cab."

"Is that all you know?"

"Yes."

"Did you not hear his name?"

"No; they didn't mix much with us. Laurence was a very common party," added Bob, majestically; "and Miss Crowe was somewhat reserved."

The officer smiled again complacently.

"You're sure they went to Thornton," he said.

"Yes—sure."

"It is a pity then that the young woman should have left her bonnet in this room," returned the officer quietly, "as she might catch cold on the journey."

Bob Trenniker looked aghast.

Cicely's bonnet was in the room—lying on the side-board.

But the actor was not to be dismayed.

"Why, what on earth do you mean?" he said, "that's Mrs. Littleton's bonnet."

The detective smiled again—his quiet, provoking smile.

"I am glad Mrs. Littleton indulges in such young fashions," he said; "but seriously, Mr. Trenniker, would you have any objection to putting on that hat which has, by some accident or another, got under the side-table yonder?"

Bob Trenniker saw that the officer saw through the ruse.

"Sir," he said, "you are in search of Cicely Crowe."

"I am."

"Do you know who the persons are who are pursuing her?"

"I do not. I know Mr. Worsop has a legal right—that is all which it is my province to inquire."

"Mrs. Littleton," cried Trenniker, as he cast an imploring look at the landlady, "I am sure that back door is open. I can feel the cold air rushing in from the garden. Please go and shut it."

Provisionally a gleam of intellect shot through the mind of Mrs. Littleton and she rose to obey instructions.

"Sir," said Bob Trenniker, "you are a man, and can understand what I am about to say. This young girl, who is, I fear, an orphan, is flying from persecutors—not friends. The two men who are seeking for her are of the worst character, and are pursuing her for no good purpose. Even if she were in the house at the present moment—which she is not—you would be serving the ends of real justice by winking at it and leaving the house."

"Mr. Trenniker," returned the officer, seriously, "I have been employed for a certain duty, and that duty I must perform, however unpleasant it is. I have with me a warrant to search this house, and I must do it."

"Very well!" said Trenniker, boldly; "the warrant says you're to search the house, and you may do it. It says nothing about my aiding you or giving you a light, so you may search the place as you please."

The officer rose, went to the door, and called aloud. Immediately he was joined by two others. One of them drew from his pocket a lamp of peculiar construction and lit it.

"Now," said the first officer, "one of you must remain here, and one must go to the back door. I will search the house."

Meanwhile Mrs. Littleton had re-entered the parlour. Her face was expressive of delight, and her fat cheeks were rosy with exertion.

"You have saved them?" cried Trenniker, eagerly. The good woman pressed his hands.

"Yes—yes!" she cried, "I have, I hope and trust. Cicely has got on a cloak of mine, with a hood over her head, and Jabez has on one of your caps. I've sent them to Mrs. Markham's, they'll be safe there."

A merry twinkle was in Bob's eye.
"In that case," he said, solemnly, as he rose from his seat, "in that case I will aid the officers of justice."

So saying, he went upstairs after the detective.

He found him in the front bedroom.

"You did not tell me your name, my friend," he said, "conversation is awkward under such circumstances."

"My name is Jones," said the officer, as he ferreted under the bed.

"Well, Jones, my boy," observed Bob, with a wave of the hand, "you are wasting your valuable time, the girl is gone, as I told you, and you'll never find her."

"Yes, and she's gone to Thornton, you say?" said Jones, as he peered into a cupboard.

"Yes, or somewhere else."

Thus Bob Trenniker went on, while the detective pursued his useless search.

His honest heart was aglow with pleasure at the idea that, after all, he had defeated the officers; and when at length he saw them depart with lugubrious faces, he fairly shouted with delight.

"Love's labour's lost," my friend," said he to Jones, as he closed the door upon the officer; "never mind. All's well that ends well; so good night, and don't come again."

Meanwhile Cicely Crowe and her strange protector found their way to Mrs. Markham's abode, showed her the paper on which the widow had scrawled with a bit of pencil, and obtained beds for the night.

Mrs. Markham's was a lodging-house of a superior kind, and both Jabez and Cicely were rather alarmed when, on the next morning, they woke and inspected the furniture of their respective rooms.

Early, however, they had a visit from Bob Trenniker.

He narrated to Cicely the events of the previous evening—advised her to keep within the house all day—promised to obtain her some engagement at an early period, and went away, leaving in Jabez Laurence's hands a sovereign by way of help.

It was about four days after this that Bob Trenniker came home from rehearsal at the theatre in high glee.

He walked along the streets as if he had suddenly come into a fortune, occasionally whistling, and on other occasions laughing aloud.

He stopped at Mrs. Markham's.

Evidently the joy he felt affected Cicely Crowe.

"Is Miss Crowe at home?" he asked.

"No, sir."

"There, now! the foolish girl has gone out!" he cried; "is Mr. Laurence in?"

"Yes, sir; he's up in his room."

Bob Trenniker did not hesitate but walked trippingly up the stairs.

On rushing into the room—full of the good news he brought—he was astonished and thrown back upon himself, as the expression goes, to see Jabez lying on the sofa with his face buried in his hands.

"Why, Jabez, my man," he cried, "what's the matter?"

"Oh! she's gone—she's gone!"

"Gone! Gone where? What do you mean?"

"Oh! Miss Crowe! she's been and gone altogether! She went away with a furriner this morning, and has left me the scrap of paper and the watch you see on the table there. I'm sure she's glad to go, for she'd been singing all the morning before, like a canary!"

Bob Trenniker took up the paper and read:

"DEAR MR. LAURENCE,—I have gone away; where I cannot tell. Do not blame me for going in secret, it is best so. I leave you a small token of my gratitude. Thank Mr. Trenniker and Mrs. Littleton for me for all their kindness. Did they understand the step I have taken, they would not blame me, but approve of it. Some day I shall see you all again. Till then, believe, gratefully yours, "CICELY CROWE."

A tear stood in Trenniker's eye as he read the letter.

"Poor girl!" he murmured, "what new step is this she has taken? Is it down or up the ladder?"

Hours—days—weeks—they spent in seeking her in vain.

Not the slightest clue could be found—not the remotest link in the chain of probabilities could be traced.

Where had she gone? And who was this friend whom the friendless girl had suddenly discovered?

(To be continued)

POLISH WOMEN.—The Polish women, especially at the present moment, occupy the chief place in the revolutionary organization. They fill various func-

tions; above all, contribute to inducing young men to join the bands. Women undertake the charge of distributing the orders of the National Government over the provinces. An interesting letter has lately transpired, written by a well-informed Polish lady, from which it appears that the bombs thrown at General Berg, were manufactured abroad, and that four men devoted themselves to carrying out the attack. It is said that among the women recently arrested, were some twenty armed with daggers. The mother of a quiet and inoffensive youth, studying at Warsaw University, lately visited the capital for the purpose of persuading the lad to join the insurgents in the field. The son obeyed. He was mortally wounded at the first engagement with the Russian troops, and has since died in the hospital at Warsaw.

THE THREE ROSES.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

ALICE REDCLIFFE.

"Tis strange
That fancy e'en in sleep should sometimes show us
Those we love. Old Play.

MRS. REDCLIFFE had put a little parcel into the hands of her servant, with directions to stow it away in the box of the carriage, and to mount himself speedily, and be ready to attend them to open the gates, and then she had gone up-stairs to see Alice before their departure.

"How do you feel now, my dearest child?" she asked, stealing her arm round her waist as she stood before a glass arranging her hair.

"Calm, mother; very calm."

"I am pleased, Alice; there is one thing I never mentioned to you."

"Well, mother?"

"That night upon which I woke you up, was not the first night I had watched by you while sleeping."

"My dear, dear mother! did I merit such goodness at your hands?"

"Yes, Alice, my love, why not? Besides, Alice, I will tell you—what new I fear you will never prove, in your own self, namely—that a mother's love never slumbers or sleeps. But, Alice, there at your bedside I witnessed a phenomenon I cannot understand."

"Well, mother?"

"Perhaps you can explain it."

"I do not know—let me hear it."

"You—but tell me first, how did you usually rest, Alice?"

"Delightfully, mother. My life, indeed, was 'twofold,' sleep had its own world."

"Ah!—go on."

"Full of bitterest remorse and most insufferable anguish as my days were, mother, I could not tell you how delicious were my nights, my dreams—ner how the blissful visions of the night enhanced the misery of the next day. It was a psychological mystery, mother. I had no control over my dreams. I have believed in the possibility of controlling dreams, but I could not do it. I would pray, read, fall asleep repeating a prayer, and instantly be transported by sleep into another world—into a higher, deeper, broader, fuller sense of existence, into the midst of visions that would seem far more real to me than does this waking life."

"And the specific nature of those visions, Alice?"

"It is difficult to recall them in all their glory, mother, they leave on my mind a vague memory of unutterable happiness, for which I should nevertheless feel unmitigated regret, for—listen, mother, in all these I had one, but one companion—the one that I have made my idol—Maurice de Lorraine!"

"Oh, Alice!"

"Listen, mother. As soon as I fell asleep, he stood by my side; we wandered, hand-in-hand, through spacious halls, cooled with sparkling fountains; perfumed with myriads of flowers; musical with thousands of birds; and thence, into saloons hung with richest and rarest paintings, with niches filled with marble statues; through into chambers of more splendour and luxury than Eastern poetry and magnificence could imagine; and thence again, into gardens of more than ideal beauty and exuberance of exotic vegetation; into vineyards, where the purple grapes, like clusters of rubies, hung amid leaves of emeralds; out into fields of ever-fresh verdure, cool and green, and gently undulating to the distant light blue horizon; through forests of mighty trees; and at every step the vision extended, or our souls expanded, and the horizon grew wider, and at last we took in the whole earth, from pole to pole, with its mighty oceans, studded with green tropical and with icy arctic and antarctic isles, with its navies and seaports; the broad continents, with their long rivers, lofty mountains, burning volcanoes, nations, kingdoms, towns, and cities. All these passed in panorama before our vision. Yet, mother, in all this, my happiness—the very climax of my joy was by my side! Then,

mother! what shall I tell you of the glory of the heavens, as seen in my vision—worlds—oh, as far more glorious than this as the sun at noonday is more glorious than a taper. I tire you, mother."

"No; but that will do, Alice. I understand now the happiness of your sleep. I have heard physicians say, that some minds, absorbed in sorrow all day, will, by a natural reaction, a merciful law of our being—pass into another set of ideas, and dream blissfully at night. I sometimes thought of that while watching you."

"Ah, my dear mother, how you lost your rest for your brain-sick child. But ah! the sin of my blissful dreams was—their travelling companion."

"No more of that, dear Alice. This evening you will cleanse your soul of that involuntary sin. Come, Alice, it is time to go, my dear."

"Jessie, I shall go with you to church, to-day," said Roland Mildred, that morning at breakfast.

"Shall you, sir?" asked the young lady.

"Yes, I shall; and I shall return with you."

"Do you not think it will be too much for you, sir? Recollect, you have not ridden so far yet—nor have you yet attempted to sit up all day without your mid-day nap."

"Tender creature! I can take my mid-day nap between morning and evening services, as well as not—so please to have a chicken fried, and some ham, and tongue, and pickles, and a bottle of sherry to accompany it, Jessie."

"Certainly, sir."

"By the way—have you seen Captain Houghton lately, Jessie?"

"No, sir."

"When did you see him last?"

"Upon the Friday morning, I believe it was, when you denied yourself and me to him."

"Is that intended as a reproach, Jessie? Yes, I did deny you to him, my little dear! my tormenting little joy! my sweet, sweet Jessie. Do you think, my pet, that I am going to let that young officer plume his gay feathers, and strut about my barn-door. No indeed, Jessie. And besides, pretty little Jessie, I am going to church with you to-day, to take care of you. Ah, I shall have twice as much joy with you, my little crab-apple, because I know that fellow in the moustache and epaulettes is dished. No! I do not mean once to lose sight of you, until the law has given me a property in you, and a right to break any civil or military coxcomb's head who dares to know whether you are handsome or homely. What! a girl I have had in my house two years, and loved all the time—for a fellow, with a couple of epaulettes, to come—to intrude—to invade my house, and want to rob me of its dearest treasure, its brightest ornament. No, indeed. One sonnetizing, music-izing fellow carries off my daughter, which was bad enough; and now another wants to carry off my sweetheart, which is infinitely worse. Thunder and lightning!—it's a wonder I had not broke the fellow's head when he came here last Friday morning!"

"Roland Mildred, I told you before, and I tell you again, Captain Houghton is not, and never can be your rival."

"And I know better. I know that every unmarried man in the parish is my rival. Haven't I eyes?"

"Use them then, sir, and see a little, pale, hard-favoured girl, whom nothing but her black eyes and black hair redeems from utter hideousness."

"Ah, good! Nothing but black eyes, and in them a spell, a power that would wile a saint from heaven! You take a raking aim at a man with those eyes, and he is perforated through and through, annihilated, and reels and staggers like a ship before it settles, and sinks. Nothing but your—eyes! Good! the bird has nothing but her song; the sphynx nothing but her riddle; Jupiter nothing but his thunderbolt; and you nothing but your eyes!"

"It seems to me, sir, that you are angry with me without a cause. Your manner toward me is as full of hatred as of friendship."

"Ah, Jessie, I am provoked. Set fire to that fellow!—Why the furies didn't I shoot him?"

"Indeed, you terrify me, Roland Mildred."

"Well, then, let me marry you, Jessie, and it will all be over. Come, what hinders? Come, let it be so. Oh, Jessie, I will take such good care of you; I will treat you so well—love you so dearly. Come, Jessie."

"Sir, you promised not to mention this subject to me again for four days."

"Four days! four days, when it was only two! When the four are out, you will say eight, then sixteen, and next, thirty-two!"

"No, I will not, sir, indeed I will not. It was four days. They will be out on Wednesday evening, and on Wednesday evening I will give you an answer."

"You will?"

"Indeed, I will!"

"Without fail?"

"Without fail."

"We'll see. Come, it is time to be off to church."

Martha Downes smilingly greeted Mrs. Redclyffe as she alighted from the carriage, and she affectionately saluted Alice, whose high, pale brow, dark serious eyes, and serene lips, whose whole sweet, solemn countenance, wore the expression of religious abstraction and exaltation. As if absorbed in high and fervid devotion, and fearing to break her train of thought and feeling, Alice merely silently pressed her hand, as she passed on, and immediately entered the church and her pew. Her mother followed, and took a seat by her side. They were scarcely seated, when another party entered, namely, Roland Mildred, strutting pompously on, wiping the perspiration from his rosy face with his scarlet bandanna pocket-handkerchief in one hand, while under the other arm was securely tucked his little evil sprite, Jessie. The dangerous eyes were cast demurely down, and the long, black lashes and ringlets drooping. On he strutted, clipping her little arm close to his side, with his head erect, shoulders thrown back, chest expanded, and every gesture breathing determination and defiance, to what, or of whom, who could tell? Jessie possibly. He passed her into his pew, and closing the door, seated himself by her side, and between her and everybody else; just as the vestry door opened, and Maurice de Lorraine appeared in his surplice. The sermon, from the text, "Love one another," was eloquent with that spirit of light and love that peculiarly distinguished Lorraine's preaching. At the close of the sermon, when he came down from the pulpit, and passed on before the altar, his countenance was elevated, and irradiated with a high celestial inspiration.

Alice, too, had caught from him the spirit of religious ecstasy, and sat there in her pew, rapt in a sort of inspired trance.

Suddenly a long low scream of "Mercy!" was heard, a heavy fall—and then Captain Houghton raised the fainting form of Alice, and bore it from the church to the parsonage.

An hour afterward, she opened her eyes. The shame, the terror, the anguish, were all gone. Her face revealed a heavenly serenity—nay, indeed, it seemed that while her body had been lying in insensibility her soul must have been in heaven, and received some divine inspiration; for when she unclosed her eyes, her countenance beamed with a celestial glory.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

JESSIE APPLETON.

I am disgraced, impeached, and baffled here;
Pierced to the soul with anger's venom'd spear;
The which no balm can cure but his heart's blood,
Which breathed this poison. *Shakespeare.*

TRUE to his promise or his threat, Roland Mildred sent his carriage over to Oak Lodge early the next morning; and as Mrs. Redclyffe, preoccupied and abstracted, did not think to invite Jessie to prolong her stay, she had no alternative but to return to her hated home. As she was about to enter the carriage, a servant of Captain Houghton's rode up and put a note in her hand. She opened it hastily and read:

"Monday, April 1st.

"MY DEAREST JESSIE,—I have been thrown from my carriage and have been laid up all day with a sprained ankle—nothing worse, only that it prevents me having the pleasure of seeing my dear girl to-day, and waiting upon Roland Mildred, as I intended to do, for the purpose of announcing to him our engagement. I am almost tempted to ask my brave friend to come and pay me a visit. Thine, longing to see thee,

"G. HOUGHTON."

Jessie put this paper in her pocket, and the carriage rolled on toward the Limes. Arrived at the fork of the road where the left-hand turn led to Fairseat, Jessie called to the driver:

"Samuel!"

"Miss!"

"Turn down to the left; I have a letter to take from Oak Lodge to Captain Houghton."

"Eh! what? yes! Certainly, miss; what was it you said?"

Jessie repeated her order.

"Can't do it, miss."

"What! how dare you, sir, disobey my order? Turn instantly to the left!"

"Sorry I can't oblige you, Miss Jessie; but master's orders to fetch you straight home were very peremptory."

"See here, sir! you insolent fellow!" said Jessie, burning with rage, "turn immediately where I tell you, or you shall meet with severe punishment."

"That may be doubtful, Miss Jessie, if I don't; whereas, if I does turn out with you, it'll be an absolute

certainty;" and so saying, the old man put whip to his horses, and drove furiously toward the Limes.

Arrived there, Jessie went into the drawing-room, and sent for Roland Mildred. He was having a conversation with Sam. Poor Sam! He thought by his literal obedience to orders, to merit his master's approbation. So it was with visible delight that he related his little altercation with Jessie, taking care to say, however, that he would very gladly have obliged her, if he could have done so without disobeying his master. His master fell into a rage with Jessie, that positively threatened to end in an apoplectic fit. But with his habitual care for her standing in the household, he relieved himself, and deluded and alarmed poor old Sam, by bursting into a fit of violent fury upon him, demanding to know why he did not mind her. His own commands were to be obeyed it was true, always excepting when her wishes interfered. He (old Sam) knew that. He ought to have his hard head broken. It should be done the next time such a thing occurred. Now, we all know that had Sam committed the mistake of taking Jessie to Fairseat, he would have been dismissed. And, in fact, the old man still suspected as much himself; however, with a deprecating "reverence," he replied that he was very sorry to have mistaken his master's wishes; that it was not yet too late to remedy the error; that the horses were still quite fresh; finally, that he could then drive Miss Jessie where she wished to go.

"No, sir. It is dinner-time. Miss Jessie is also very much fatigued. I shall not permit her to go over all that ground again. Begone!"

It was at this moment that the message from Jessie arrived, calling him into the drawing-room. He went in, putting a violent restraint upon himself, welcomed her home, and desired to be informed of her particular pleasure and purpose in sending for him.

"Captain Houghton is indisposed at Fairseat. I am the bearer of a letter from Oak Lodge to him. I wished to take it there at once, but your man refused to drive me thither. Now I wish you to give orders that I may go."

"Not for the world, my dear. You are mad! A young lady visit an unmarried gentleman at his house! Upon no account, whatever. I will take the letter myself. Where is it, Jessie?"

"Excuse me, sir. I must only deliver this letter with my own hand."

"Ah, who is it from? My sister? Alice?"

"Sir, it seems to me that you are cross-questioning me."

"Ho, ho, ho!" laughed Roland Mildred. "No, my dear; but, in a word, I cannot send you to Captain Houghton to-day, upon any pretence whatever. Let the Oak Lodge folks find their own messengers. Anything else that I can do for your pleasure—not that, not that, my dear Jessie. It is too much to ask of a man. What are you so deeply disappointed at not seeing him at church yesterday, that you must go and make him a visit to-day?"

Whether Jessie's guardian spirit deserted her that night or not, I do not know. Certain it is, however, that she was not one to brook control, or bear disappointment. The time was not ripe openly to defy Roland Mildred, if indeed defiance would have served her turn at all. Be that as it might, at eight o'clock, she bade good-night to him, and retired to her own room—not to stay, however. Very soon she cautiously emerged from the chamber, and creeping stealthily down-stairs, left the house as before, unconscious of a dark figure perseveringly dodging her course.

The same luxurious chamber, the same handsome occupant awaited Jessie Appleton; the only difference being, that Captain Houghton, in a gorgeous dressing-gown, reclined in a large, easy chair, covered with gold-coloured satin, with his wounded foot resting upon a cushion.

"My dear, brave, imprudent girl, I knew you would come. But why then not come in the day-time, and with a proper escort?"

Jessie explained, with luxuriant embellishments, the occurrences of the day.

"My dear Jessie, to what tyranny you are subjected. But take courage. As soon as I can get a boot on this crippled foot I shall go over to the Limes, and paying Roland Mildred the respect due him as your guardian, little as he deserves it, I shall ask leave to visit you at his house, informing him of our engagement at the same time. I do trust, my dear love, that I shall be able to come over to-morrow."

Jessie exerted all her powers of fascination that evening, and with unprecedented success; never was a rational man more thoroughly bewildered, than was Captain Houghton when Jessie left him that night. Look where he would, or shut his eyes if he pleased, the image of a fiery and intoxicating sprite, whose eyes were grappling-hooks, whose ringlets were nets and meshes, caught and entangled him.

In the meantime she pursued her way home, where a warm welcome was awaiting her, of which, by the way, she was quite unconscious.

Roland Mildred paced up and down the long area of his library, cursing the lameness that still prevented his mounting a horse. Now he stood with his back to the glowing fire; now he walked to the window and looked out into the night; now he pulled the bell-rope violently until the whole house resounded, and the whole grove echoed, bringing in a servant.

"Has Sam returned yet?"

"No, sir."

"Curse him, he is very slow! Do you be on the watch for him, sir; and as soon as he comes, do you take charge of his horse yourself, and send him, without loss of time, to me."

"Yes, sir; anything else, please?"

"No, go."

The man withdrew.

"What keeps the fellow so long! Nine—yes, by Jove, ten o'clock, and he has not returned yet."

He seized the bell-rope, and gave it another succession of violent jerks. The man immediately re-entered.

"More light here; my candle is sinking in its socket."

"Yes, sir, Sam has come, sir. I hear his horse galloping into the yard now."

"Out of my sight, then, in double-quick time, and send him up here. Let him bring candles."

"Yes, sir; and the man withdrew."

In a very few minutes Sam entered the room bearing the lights.

"Ah, you have come. Set them on the chimney-piece. Now, then, you kept a watch over your young lady?"

"Yes, sir."

"You followed her at a respectful distance—near enough to protect, yet not near enough to annoy her?"

"Yes, sir; no, sir—I mean she never knew anything about my being on her track."

"Be careful of your phraseology, sir. On her track! On Miss Appleton's track!"

"I beg your—and the lady's pardon, sir. I meant to say she never knew as she had a faithful servant behind her keeping watch over her to keep off danger."

"Very well; but if it be in you at all to give a consecutive narrative, do it."

"Sir?"

"If you can tell a straight story, tell it. Where and when did you first see Miss Appleton, after she left the parlour?"

"Yes, sir; at the door, sir."

"When? What hour?"

"At half-past eight o'clock, sir."

"Yes. That was the hour she took leave of me for the night, saying that she had already kept me beyond my time (which was true), and that she would then go to bed herself (which was false). Well, sir, what then?"

"You see, sir, it was very dark, and I was settin' underneath them there stone stairs as goes down from that door, and every single soul 'bout the house was gone to bed, except 'twixt you, and me, and one other person. Last I heard the door over my head open, creak, and shut, and a soft pit-pat, like steps coming down the stairs; then I peeped out from underneath my hiding-place, and I saw Miss Jessie, with her two eyes, large and shining like two stars, and moving along in the darkness; and that was all I could see of her."

"Be careful. Mind of whom you speak. Reflect, sir, that you were ordered to follow that eccentric young lady, at a respectful distance, for her protection," said Roland, almost vainly trying to reconcile his system of espionage with the idea of perfect confidence in, and respect for, his charge, with which he wished to impress his household. "Go on, sir."

"Well, the young lady, sir, passed on through the darkness without any light, except her blazing eyes—beg your pardon, sir—on to the stable, sir, where she leads out and saddles a creature that was no less than Fleetwood, as she knowed wonned the golden cup at the races last autumn."

"Yes; well!"

"She saddles him quick as thought, jumps into her seat, and is off like a streak of lightning."

"Well, well; you followed her?"

"Yes, sir; yes, master; but not on the horse I mostly ride, and that is what I wanted to explain to you, sir, because I never makes use of the bloods, sir, except in a case of necessity, more especially in the night season, because—"

"Confound it, sir, go on with the narrative without digression."

"Then I saddled Lightfoot, sir, though he was one of the best bloods."

"Come; what next?"

"I galloped after her, sir; hard as I could, till she must of heard me."

"Blockhead!"

"No, I was not; because when I heard her stop to listen, I stops and turns softly aside out of the road,

and goes into the wood till I hear her go on again. Then I thought, as there was no turning for half-a-mile, maybe I had better depend on the dark and ride swiftly past her, and wait for her at the fork; and so I did, sir, and she stopped when she heard me coming, and stood still somewhere in the dark—somewhere side of the road—till I galloped past. I got to the fork, and waited under the trees till I heard her come sweeping past like a gale of wind, and then I knowed she was going to Fairseat, so I followed after her, soft and swift, and kept nigh to her, too."

"Humph, Sam, you know what I am when I turn pale, and what I mean when I speak low. Now, mark me; tell me about Miss Appleton without once diverging from the straight line of the story. Now, then, go on."

"Yes, sir. Well, sir, I keeps behind of her all the way till we come to the glen, then I takes a short cut through the glen, and brings up underneath the poplar trees as circles round three sides of the lawn. I ties my horse in a dark place, and runs 'long under the fence till I gets round to the back of the house. The back gate was open, and I slips in and goes where I see a light a glimmerin' through the blinds of a great big end window, as I afterwards found out was Captain Houghton's own room. All was dark; all still. Presently I hear a horse step soft, and then I hear somebody drop softly off the horse to the ground; next I sees two shining eyes coming through the dark: then the door along side o' me opens, and a blaze of light pours out just as Miss Jessie flits in, and the door shuts again. Then I goes 'round, and up the steps and peeps through the keyhole, but I could see nothing at all; then I tries to peep through the window-shutters, but I couldn't see a single thing."

"Who authorized you to look through the key-hole and window-shutters?" angrily exclaimed his master, though it is to be presumed that if old Sam had made any discoveries he would not have been averse to hearing them and profiting by his servant's eavesdropping. As it turned out a fruitless peeping, however, he could afford to indulge in a fit of virtuous indignation without loss.

Indeed, sir, I thought—," commenced old Sam, excusing himself.

"What business had you to think? Well, and then?"

"Then, sir, I came away and left her there, 'cause I thought how Captain Houghton would be sure to see her safe at home."

"Let us see; what time was that?"

"Nigh as I could guess, sir, I think it was about nine o'clock."

"There, then. Now never let me hear of this night-ride again from you or from anybody else, for if you do—you know me."

"Just so, sir; and glad to get off, old Sam precipitately retreated."

After he had left the room the jealous, enraged man walked several times up and down, communing with himself as follows:

"Now, shall I call her here when she returns, or shall I wait till to-morrow morning? Nay, to-night, it shall be to-night. I will go and lie in wait to catch her in her hasty return—in her fright. Then I will accuse her, overwhelm her with mortification, and then—why then, perhaps, because I know, with all her flagrant coquetry, she is too cold and cunning not to be pure—why then I will forgive her, for by Beelzebub, I cannot, *will not*, resign her! Yes, I will forgive her, and if she has a heart lurking anywhere in her cold bosom, she must melt at that. I mean—I will forgive her on certain conditions; namely, that she marries me forthwith—and then—and then—and then let me catch your eyes or heart wandering, my lady, that's all!"

Full of these contending passions and purposes—(for he was talking in one breath of forgiveness and revenge)—he hastened out of the room, went down the passage, and paused before Jessie's bedroom at the opposite extremity. He turned his back, folded his arms, and leaned against it. He might have been there perhaps twenty minutes, when a side door, about half-way the length of the passage, and leading down a flight of back stairs, opened cautiously, closed slowly and softly, and a light, stealthy step, only to be heard in the dead silence, came pit-patting up the passage. It was pitch dark. The squire held out his arms. The light step fled on—the light form was caught in the arms—to the bosom of Roland Mildred. A slight start, but no scream, not even an exclamation; only a low, determined, husky—

"Who are you, spy?" from the bad but brave girl.

"Your humble servant, Jessie Appleton, and the poor master of this house."

"Roland Mildred!"

"At your command, Miss Appleton."

"At my chamber door at this hour, sir; you!"

"Even so, at this hour of the night, half-past ten o'clock," replied the squire, ironically.

"And what may be your business, here, may I inquire, sir?" demanded Jessie, haughtily.

"To welcome you home from your midnight ride."

"What mean you, sir?"

"That you are discovered. Come, Jessie, accompany me to my room—to some place where I can take a look at you." And drawing her arm within his own, he forcibly led her down the whole length of the passage and into the library. Closing the door, he locked it, and put the key in his pocket. Then taking the lighted candle, he flashed it towards her, saying, insultingly:

"Come, let's see you."

She sprang sharply around and confronted him.

"By Heaven, Jessie, you ride out at midnight to catch beauty from the starlight. This moment you look as fierce, sleek, and beautiful as a young tigress." He flashed the candle over her and gazed at her with admiration, as well he might.

There she stood, bright, ardent, fierce, her alight and elegant figure clad in the tightly fitting riding-habit, her small and graceful head adorned by a little black velvet riding-cap, black plumes tipped with crimson, mingled flame-like with the splendid fall of glossy black ringlets. There she stood; one hand resting upon the back of a chair, the other carelessly twining among her rich ringlets, her cheeks burning with excitement, her splendid eyes flashing with defiance, her whole darning, elfin face, keen, bright, and fierce. And there for an instant he stood, looking at her intently, until he began to tremble, then he returned the candle to the candlestick on the mantelpiece, and went and drank a deep draught of ice-water to cool his fever and settle his nerves. Jessie observed the action and smiled with triumph.

"Well, I told you, Jessie, that you are discovered."

"To-be-what?" demanded she, deliberately.

"How cool you are, to be sure."

"Yes, though I have not drank a quart of ice-water."

"Do you understand that you are found out?"

"To be what? as I asked before."

"You have been watched—traced to Fairseat—seen to enter Captain Houghton's house. Come, explain that, madam, if you please."

"Certainly, though I might assuredly question your right of inquiry."

"Well! Come, the explanation. Let's hear your story."

"Don't be in a hurry."

"Ho, ho! the duplicity; you want to invent a story. Come, no delay, now."

"Oh, no hurry. Life is long; a young man like you, has quite a future before him."

"Good! you try to inflame my anger. I—I will keep my temper. You were caught. You were—seen."

"Yes, sir."

"To—leave—this—house."

"Yes, sir."

"At—nine—o'clock—at—night."

"Yes, sir."

"You were traced—"

"Yes, sir."

"To Fairseat."

"Yes, sir."

"Aye, mock me! You were seen to enter—"

"Yes, sir."

"Captain Houghton's house."

"Yes, sir."

"Explain that."

"Yes, sir. I entered his house."

The blood rushed to Roland Mildred's head, his throat swelled, his face turned black, the veins started like cords, he trembled all over, he staggered, sank into a chair; the perspiration started, streamed from his face; this saved him from a stroke of apoplexy, I do believe. He tremblingly drew a handkerchief from his pocket, wiped his eyes again and again, heaved a sigh, and recovered himself.

"An—audacious, un—unblushing girl," gasped Roland Mildred, nearly suffocated.

"Why should I blush?"

"She—she glories in her shame."

"In my innocence and the perfect safety of my position, sir."

"The perfect safety of your position, you shameless—oh, I do not wish to forget that she is a woman."

"Now we are going to have rehearsed another comedy of jealousy."

"Jealousy! not so, my dear girl. Do not flatter yourself that I shall amuse you with any such food for satire this evening. No, Jessie, but you need to be looked after and taken care of."

"Possibly you would recommend a strait-jacket, sir."

"Possibly I might—at all events you need to be controlled; and I must have a better right than now I have to control you. And now, this night, Jessie, and before you leave this room, we must come to a downright understanding."

Her tone changed. She left off her flippant, half-scoffing manner of replying, and seating herself composedly, she said:

"Yes—it is as well that, before I leave the room, we do come to a distinct and final understanding; pray proceed, sir."

"Then, Jessie, are you ready to give me your hand to-morrow?"

"No, sir."

"When then?"

"Never, sir."

"Never?"

"Most assuredly, never!"

"Ha! well see. Pray why?"

"Because, sir, I have promised it to Captain Houghton."

"No, that can't be. It is a falsehood. I beg your pardon—I mean a mistake."

"He will call on you to-morrow, sir, in your capacity of my guardian."

"It's not so! What, Houghton? he, so haughty!"

"Exactly, sir; so haughty, that he defies the commentaries of his neighbours, and dares to please himself in the choice of a wife, even when that choice rests on a penniless girl like me!"

"Here's a fust! Oh, it's all an imposition! It can't be so! What's more, it shan't be so! By Heaven, shan't it! What! Houghton! he is betrothed to Alice!"

"She has discarded him, sir, or set him free, which amounts to the same thing!"

"I knew you were trying to entrap him. I knew you were flirting desperately with him—but I knew that you were too selfish, cold and fierce to come to any harm; and I never dreamed that he would wish to marry you?"

"Thank you, sir."

"Jessie, he shall not have you! He shall not have you to save his, to save your own life!"

She smiled contemptuously.

"And what is more, I will have you myself. I've used persuasion, entreaty, long enough; now I'll try something else—for, though all the powers were league'd to prevent it, I will have you!"

"And if you do, sir, you will but endorse what I have told him myself. You will but give him a new motive for hastening our marriage, that I may be the more speedily released from this persecution!"

"By Heaven, then, he shall not have you! What! you that I have had in my sight for two years—you that I have been habituated to believe my own—you that I have adored, when I have looked forward even to long future years?"

"Of gout and plethors, and being nursed—an enchanting prospect for me, sir. I always looked upon you as a father; and as a daughter, I would even nurse you in your old age and infirmities!"

"Confound daughters! Old age! infirmity! indeed—that is insulting! By Heaven, you need not think of marrying that whiskered fellow! He shall not have you to save his life or your own. If the worst comes to the worst, I will go to him, and say that which will prevent his marrying you!"

Now Jessie turned deadly pale with fear and rage. Her very lips were white, and trembling as she said:

"You! a gentleman! No! you will never do that!"

"Look in my face and see if I will not!"

"Do it, sir, then! At last, in fury, broke out Jessie.

"Do it! but do not hope that perfidy will serve you! For, look you, I am a fiend incarnate! My mother's matchless wrongs, my own, have made me so. The only human feeling I have, is an affection for Houghton—an affection that shall not be wounded! shall not, under any contingency, while he only loves me!"

Her face worked, nay was convulsed with the warring passions of anguish, despair, and rage. The storm, raging in her bosom, attracted him powerfully. He had been very pale—now his face flushed deeply; he stretched out his hand, caught her—strained her to his bosom—cleared her ringlets from her agonized face, and half-suffocated her with kisses, exclaiming:

"And I will tell him that thus I have had her in my arms—thus I have strained her to my bosom!"

"And thus she finally punished him with death!"

said Jessie, swiftly snatching a short dagger from her bosom, and driving it to the hilt in his chest.

Suddenly, with a sharp cry, he bounded up, dropped her, pulled the blade from his bosom, and cast it down, exclaiming:

"Serpent!" A dark stream of blood trickled from the wound; he tried to staunch it with his handkerchief. She had started to her feet, and stood pale and rigid. They looked at each other.

On the carpet between them, glittering and flashing in the firelight, lay the tiny jewelled poniard.

"Aye, sir, look at me! I have no fear! No, I do not mind taking life! do not fear to lose my own! Send now and denounce me!"

"Unhappy girl! I have no intention to denounce you!"

"Say that a youthful girl—an orphan child—was cast, helpless, upon your protection. Say that she con-

fided in your honour; say that you persecuted her with an odious suit which when she rejected, you punished her with loathsome caresses! Say that when she would have avenged herself, her heart was brave, her eye steady, her hand firm, and her steel sharp, and she drew some bad blood!" She finished with a wild and bitter laugh, and was turning to leave the room, when he faintly recalled her, saying feebly:

"Jessie! I forgive you; but—but—for Heaven's sake, a surgeon—I die."

(To be continued.)

IT IS BETTER.

'Tis better to go in the morning,
Though fond hearts in anguish should grieve;
But labour and sorrow awaiteth
The pilgrim who tarries till eve.

It is better to go while around us
The arms of affection are thrown,
Than to watch as they loosen and vanish,
And leave us to struggle alone.

It is better to go ere the friendships
Of earth shall grow sordid and cold;
Ere doubts and estrangements shall enter
The hearts that were fondest of old.

For oh, 'tis saddest and hardest,
To lose love—even death were a boon,
To outliving the loves we have trusted,
And find that they fail us too soon!

It is better to go ere our sweetness
Is lost in the difficult way;
It is better to reach heaven early,
Than to drag through the wearisome day.

R. B. E.

THE GREY EAGLE OF THE SIOUX.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE SOLDIER.—VALERIE.—JESSIE REED.

WITH mainly independence Maurice Rutherford, two hours later, engaged himself to a company of fur-traders, journeying to the trading-posts of Minnesota, and through the deep snows and fierce winds of winter, travelled back to St. Paul's, the spot whence he had started six months previous with such sanguine anticipations. He had made his arrangements to set out for Pike's Peak, when the tocsin of war rang through the land, and he was one of the first to respond to the call for volunteers. Exchanging his hunting-suit for the uniform of a soldier, he joined the western division of the army, then under General Fremont. During the stormy times at St. Louis, he proved himself to possess the true mettle for a soldier, and received the warm approval of the officers. A letter from his mother informed him that she had accepted an invitation from a friend, who had removed to St. Paul's, to spend some time with her; and when, after being wounded in the battle of Springfield, he obtained a furlough, he hastened to join her in Minnesota. She had given him the street and number of her friend's residence, and it was evening when the hackney-coach he had secured drew up at the door. Wounded as he was, he could not fail to notice the stateliness of the exterior, and the luxuries within, of which he caught glimpses through the long, French windows. His mother met him at the threshold, and assisted the comrade, who had thus far accompanied him, to lead him into the drawing-room. They had not met before since he had left home a year previous, and murmuring:

"Oh, Maurice, my son, how much you must have suffered, how rejoiced I am to see you again!" she wound her arms about him, and wept like a child. But when the joy of meeting had subsided in some degree, she said:

"You have not yet been introduced to our kind hostess; I will speak to her."

She glided from the room, and presently returned with a young and beautiful lady; for a time the wounded soldier gazed at her in mute surprise, but at length he said:

"I must be as delirious as I was at the Selkirk settlement; strange fancies haunt me—I could take my oath that Sister Cecilia stood before me!"

"Not Sister Cecilia, dear Maurice, but Valerie, sister Valerie!"

"And where, pray, is the costume of the Grey Nun?"

"Packed away in my chest."

"I am glad of it; let the rosary lie there too; with your silk dress, and your well-chosen ornaments, you look like your old self, Valerie. But why, why are you here?"

"You ought to be the last to ask; amid the chances and changes of war, your mother needed sympathy; I have kept my promise to be in all things a sister."

"Yes," continued Mrs. Rutherford, "she has brought

the house in which you find us, and is living as Valerie Valade's child should. When I was at boarding-school, her mother, as you know, was my dearest friend, and when I see her gliding about it seems as if the dead lived again."

"Be assured," exclaimed Rutherford, as Valerie knelt beside him, "I appreciate your kindness, and I hope I may yet have power to reward you."

Valerie dashed away a tear, but with real French vivacity rejoined:

"I am certain I can play the part of Sister of Charity better than hostess. You recollect my nursing and its result? It is high time that you should be escorted to your rooms; since you are lame, I have taken care that they should be as easy of access as possible."

His comrade having left him in the drawing-room before Valerie's entrance, a servant was summoned to assist him, while Valerie tripped on before them. The weary man was soon ushered into a suit of large, airy, luxurious rooms, where, in the folds of the lace curtains, and canopy, the green jalousies, and the cool matting, as well as the light bamboo furniture, he could trace Valerie's West Indian taste. A great lounging-chair was drawn forward for him, and his wounds dressed and bandaged as no surgeon could. Weary with his journey and the toilsome life he had led in the camp and on the battle-field, his first night's sleep under Valerie's roof was sweet and refreshing, and when he awoke he was startled to find himself away from the camp-ground where he had slept, with only the sky above him, or paced his lonely round on guard. Rising, he with some difficulty flung on a dressing-gown, and then dragged himself towards the window. Great Heaven! what sent a stern gleam to his eyes, and made his heart beat stormily? Galloping along the street below for a morning ride on the prairie, or a visit to the suspension-bridge, he perceived a female figure. Yes, well he knew the superb form, the face half-shadowed by the brim of her jaunty hat—the beautiful equestrienne was Jessie Reed—Jessie Marston, mayhap. Her father and another gentleman were riding with her, and all were elegantly dressed and mounted; there was no trace of her life on the prairies. The young man shuddered as he thought that they who one short year before had been lovers, were so completely alienated.

Time went on, and Rutherford was able to ride with Valerie across the suspension-bridge, and strike into the prairie, gorgeous with its wealth of roses, tulips, lillies, fuchsias and mossassin flowers, and find arching above him that deep, blue sky peculiar to Minnesota, whose cerulean depths the eye seemed almost to fathom, yet only to realize that they were illimitable. Suddenly they met Jessie and her father; Mr. Reed, with the courtesy habitual to him even when he tenanted a log hut, drew rein, and made a motion to his daughter to stop her horse.

"My child," said her father; "I am certain this must be Mr. Rutherford."

"Yes, sir," was the low reply.

"Have I the pleasure of addressing Mrs. Marston?" asked Rutherford. "If so, I must offer my congratulations."

"I still answer to the name of Jessie Reed," responded the girl; "Mr. Marston has been suddenly called to Europe; he received letters, announcing that the Paris partner of their very extensive firm had proved a fraudulent villain, and he was obliged to set sail at once."

"Ah, and so you are staying in St. Paul's?"

"Yes, we have boarded at Winslow House since spring. Pray, introduce me to your friend!"

With a strange mingling of pride and pique, Rutherford presented Valerie, and then Mr. Reed observed:

"We heard you were in the army, and your costume confirms the assertion."

"Yes, sir, I have the honour of belonging to General Fremont's division. I am now on furlough for the first time since I enlisted, as I was wounded in the battle of Springfield."

Mr. Reed made some remarks on the battle, and the fall of Lyon, but he could not comprehend the expression of Jessie's face. At length, her father asked:

"How long shall you remain here?"

"My furlough extends through another week, but I shall probably leave to-morrow, as a soldier should not be absent from the field when he is able to mount his horse."

"You have friends with whom you are staying in the city, I presume?"

"Yes. Mademoiselle Valade was once an inmate of our family; her mother and mine were very intimate in their youth, and after Madame Valade's death, Valerie was consigned to her care. Since I have enlisted, and lost all hope of establishing my north-western claims, she has generously taken my mother to her home and heart."

How painfully these words fell on Jessie's ear, and yet she crushed back her tears, and said, gaily:

"Mademoiselle Valade has proved herself a heroine; she deserves to be canonized among good saints."

The interview was becoming so painful to the young man, that he hastily terminated it, and dashed on at Valerie's bridle-rein. Jessie ventured to cast one glance back at his beautiful companion, muttering:

"This then is Valerie Valade! It was true—she had left the convent for his sake, and looking at her, none would wonder if he worshipped her."

On returning to the hotel, she resolved to learn what she could with regard to the stranger, and casually remarked to a fellow-boarder, that she had just met and been introduced to a Miss Valade, adding:

"Have you ever heard of her?"

"Indeed I have; she would be the belle of St. Paul's if she chose to go into society; the whole city is ringing with her name, and they tell the most romantic story about her."

"Go on, I am all attention."

"Well, they say that she has been a nun, and took the veil after a love-quarrel with a young gentleman to whom she was engaged. But they chanced to meet, and the old love revived; a reconciliation too was effected, and when he enlisted in the army, she flew from the nunnery, bought an elegant house in St. Paul's, and has offered his mother a home with her. When he was wounded at Springfield, he was brought here, and she has nursed him most devotedly. Other gentlemen would be glad to secure the prize, for she is not only beautiful, but vastly rich, and yet she keeps them at arm's length."

"Very constant, I am sure."

"Yes, yes; and all these things combine to make her a town talk. Heigh-ho! I wish I were Valerie Valade!" And she moved to the window, and leaning out, added, "There she goes with her soldier lover; upon my word he is handsome, and just pale enough to look interesting. Besides, he is very brave, and none of us women like cowards. I don't blame Valerie for her devotion."

Jessie Reed did not speak, and her companion was too much absorbed in watching the pair of equestrians who were making such a sensation, to notice how pale Miss Reed had grown.

Thus the breach between the lovers was widened, and when, before leaving St. Paul's, Rutherford's mother told her son with what depth and fervour Valerie still loved him, he would have given worlds if he could have forgotten that vanished dream.

On the day after Maurice Rutherford left St. Paul's, Waldo Marston returned, and to Mr. Reed's surprise, Jessie received him most cordially, and when he declared he was impatient to claim his bride, listened with a smiling lip. Elated at the success of his schemes, he, in a private conference, and over a flask of wine, which perhaps rendered him still more communicative, for the first time revealed the fact that it was through his agency an anonymous letter had been written to Jessie before she left the Red River settlement. Mr. Reed started to his feet, exclaiming:

"Ah! I understand now what I could not fathom before. I knew a shadow had fallen between her and Maurice Rutherford, but I could not think you base enough to deprive her of her life's one joy—a belief in his love. I—I do not like it, Marston!"

"All's fair in love; all's well that ends well. John Marsh and this Rutherford disposed of more effectually than he would be if I had shot him, I have only White Cloud's ghost to vex me."

"White Cloud's ghost, what do you mean?"

"Why, she stung me to madness, and I flung her into the lake, but since then she has haunted my house at the Selkirk settlement, and if Meda, that meddling Sioux girl, had any help when she guided Jessie over the prairies and through the woods, it must have been supernatural. But whatever you may think of it, 'twas a grand hit when I dictated that anonymous letter."

"Marston, I have been wrong; I did not promise you that you should toss my daughter's heart about like a football."

"Break your oath, if you dare. Remember—remember the secret of the Red Rock!"

The hot flush receded from Horace Reed's face, leaving him deadly pale, and shivering like a leaf; he sank into his chair, muttering:

"You know how to silence me—I am in your power, Marston. Do what you will, I cannot say you nay." And with a groan, he bowed his head upon the table.

CHAPTER XVII. PROMISES AND THREATS.

In a few moments, Mr. Reed rose, and stalked from the room, leaving Marston alone. He was growing jubilant over his wine and brandy, when to his horror and dismay, he perceived two figures in the piazza, on which the windows of the apartment opened. He started from his seat, and the next instant White

Cloud and Will Baum stood before him. He had, for some time, known that Baum was no longer his friend, but as he had not heard anything of him for several months, he had begun to hope that his machination with regard to him had proved successful. It was in no enviable mood that he now met him, and his language only increased Marston's uneasiness.

"Villain!" exclaimed Baum, who, knowing his superstitious tendencies, had resolved to touch his heart where it was most vulnerable; "the dead and the living are leagued against you. When does the wedding take place, for we must be there, at all events."

"Baum, Baum, you talk loud enough to wake the dead. I am in good repute here. Keep still for a month, if no longer. I will give you anything you ask to seal your lips."

Will Baum remained silent for a time, watching his foe as a tiger would watch his prey, then he said with a contemptuous smile:

"Confound it! I have a great mind to see how liberal you really are. Come, offer up."

"Five thousand dollars will be as nothing, if I can be satisfied you'd hold your tongue."

"Pshaw! 'tis but a drop in the bucket; give me in addition, a deed of your fine place at the Selkirk settlement."

Marston hesitated, but as he saw Baum walking away, he bounded towards him, and assented to have the papers drawn early in the morning.

"And what shall White Cloud have to keep her aloof?" demanded the woman. "She asks only justice—death cannot hold her while her shield is wronged. Give Minniwawa her heritage."

"By Jove, between you both, you will beggar me!"

"Dare you refuse me? I will haunt you till you do me justice!"

"Meet me on the suspension-bridge before noon with Baum, and I will tell you my decision."

They withdrew, and while these scenes were being enacted there, Horace Reed had heard a tap, light as the peck of a bird's bill against the door of his chamber, and in another instant John Marsh stood in his presence, tall and ungainly as of old, and still more thin and wan. With his own hands he closed and locked the door, and in a hollow tone, asked:

"Mr. Reed, do you recollect me?"

"Yes, you took refuge in my cabin on the prairies, when there was so much fear from repeated attacks of the Sioux, and—some time later we met on an evening which we are neither of us likely to forget, at the Selkirk settlement."

"I have suffered much in body and in mind since then," continued John; "and I once thought I must die without another interview with you; but I have gained strength to reach St. Paul's." He paused, brushed back the damp hair from his brow, and went on:

"I have come to tell you a story, sir, to warn you again. I know Waldo Marston, root and branch; for twenty years I lived in his first wife's family, and there wasn't in the country a more beautiful or innocent girl than Hester. She was seventeen when she fell desperately in love with Waldo Marston; her father never liked him, but he would deny Hester nothing, and six months later she became Marston's wife. I went to live with my young mistress in her new home, and what she suffered in her married life no words of mine could tell. He was a brute—a fiend in human shape—and yet she loved him through all. At last he deserted her, when he found that her father was bankrupt, and she racked her brain to find whither he had gone. Finally she heard he was living in the Selkirk settlement, and she, and I, and her only child, Blanche, started in a rude emigrant waggon, on a journey to the north-west."

He proceeded to detail the particulars with which our readers have already become acquainted, and continued:

"He was as much her murderer as if he had held poison to her lips or stabbed her to the heart—she died of slow torture. God will hold him responsible for her wretched life. On her grave I swore to avenge her wrongs, but within the last few weeks a change has come over me. The language of the Bible is 'Forgive your enemies,' and I believe I have sinned in my deadly hate of that man. I am here to-night, not athirst for revenge, but to reveal the truth, that you may refuse your sanction to his marriage with Miss Jessie. If you do not, mark my words, you will rue the day!"

Thus he left Horace Reed, and for hours he sat wakeful and restless, in a stormy conflict between duty and pride.

The next morning Will Baum and White Cloud met Marston on the airy structure that spans the Mississippi like a magic bridge, and the villain who had been intimidated by their bold threats, acceded to Baum's demand, and gave a handsome sum to Minniwawa, the dusky child, to whom we have before alluded. When they were lost to sight, a volley of oaths broke from Marston's lips, and he said grimly:

"Misfortunes never come alone, but in flocks, like ill-omened birds. What will turn up next, I wonder? I half-suspect Rutherford may get a chance to explain matters to Jessie, and manage to carry her off unless I secure her at once. Our wedding shall take place this evening, for my bride elect told me the wedding-dress was expected to-day from St. Louis."

Hurrying back to the city, he apprised Jessie of his wishes, and she readily assented. Friends at the hotel, and other acquaintances, were invited, and Marston was a proud man, when he walked into the grand drawing-room, which had been thrown open for the wedding, with the beautiful Jessie leaning on his arm. Her eyes were painfully brilliant, her lips compressed, her cheek as white as the rich moire robe she wore; indeed, she seemed like a snow image, standing there in her bridal vestments. The ceremony commenced, but when the rector asked, "Who gives the bride away?" there was no response.

"Who gives the bride away?" repeated the clergyman.

Still Horace Reed was dumb, and one of the groomsmen said:

"I believe the bride's father is present."

"Yes, he is here, but he will never, never give his child, his all, to Waldo Marston, when her heart is dying within her! For years my lips have been sealed; I have been the veriest coward in Christendom, but at length I have summoned strength to speak. That villain has beggared me in fortune, in reputation; my last treasure he shall not have!"

Jessie stood in silent wonder; the clergyman appeared spell-bound, and every eye turned towards the pallid speaker.

"My life has its dark secrets," resumed Mr. Reed, "and though I was blind and weak not to resist temptation, directly or indirectly, Waldo Marston has been the cause of all my sin, my suffering, and the shame has blighted me. Having failed in business, I went to California, and there I met Marston. He kept a gambling saloon, one of the most notorious in San Francisco, four years ago, and was the ringleader of more than half the crimes perpetrated among the miners; lynching would have been too good for him, and more than once he was in extreme danger, but through his craft he managed to escape. At his faro tables I played high whenever I could obtain gold to risk—played and lost, played and lost, till I was ruined. One night he and a horde of allies came out to a place called Red Rock, on the banks of the Yuba, and lured us miners into their toils. Maddened by my losses, I drank to drown trouble, drank till I was not Horace Reed, but a fiend! The liquors had been drugged, and we were all like so many wild beasts. A dispute arising between me and my antagonist, blows succeeded fierce words and threats, and I felled him to the earth. That was the last I knew till Waldo Marston clutched my arm, and said, hoarsely:

"Holt is dead! you killed him in your quarrel last night, and they flung him into the Yuba! You must be given up to justice!"

"No, no, keep my secret, for Jessie's sake, keep my secret!"

"He pretended to be exceedingly shocked at the idea of shielding me from due punishment, but at length he said:

"On one condition I will grant your request."

"Name it."

"I love your daughter; give me your solemn promise that she shall be mine when she is eighteen."

"My whole soul shrank from the sacrifice; but what could I do? I gave the required promise, and since then have been his bond-slave. But I now see my error; my child, my pure and beautiful child, shall not be his; he broke his first wife's heart, and there is an Indian woman, who to-day lives to curse his name and his memory!"

At this juncture White Cloud advanced, leading her child, and with Indian eloquence rehearsed the story which she had told Meda a year previous in the forest, concluding with an account of his attempt to murder her, and her rescue from the waters by the chief's daughter.

By a strong effort Marston had managed to maintain a braggart air, till his former confederate, and the man whom he feared more than all the forces that could have been combined against him, advanced with a face which portended evil. Then he staggered back, and must have fallen, had he not leaned against the wall for support.

"Waldo Marston quails before me," said Will Baum, "and no wonder. I understand the mysteries of his life; I was with him in California; I can attest the truth of Horace Reed's statement, with regard to his character. Here, in the presence of these witnesses, I denounce him as a gambler, a thief, a murderer! If he had his deserts, he would have died a felon's death long ago. But take heart, Miss Jessie; your father's blow on that terrible night, which he so well remembers, was not fatal. I am ready to prove by his own mouth, that Holt is living."

He paused, and a traveller who had taken lodgings at the hotel a few hours previous, entered the drawing-room, and stood where the light of the chandelier fell on his face.

"Holt! Holt!" cried Mr. Reed, springing forward, a wild joy flashing from his eyes. "Oh, if I had known this before, how much agony might I have been spared."

"Marston has known it for a year or more, but he kept it from you, that he might retain you in his power till your daughter was his wife, and since I ceased to be his tool, I have only been waiting till I could get Holt here to testify for himself."

"Yes," exclaimed the traveller. "I am Jack Holt; Reed's blow stunned me, and I was badly bruised, but not dead, thank God! I have had space for repentance; the scenes of Red Rook taught me a lesson, and I have never since entered a gambling-house!"

A murmur ran through the room, as Reed clasped Jack Holt's hand, and shook it in a silence more eloquent than words, while Jessie, as if unconsciously, knelt, and raising her hands to heaven, seemed to offer a mute thanksgiving.

At this accumulation of evidence against him, Marston started, and made an effort to escape, first through the door, and then through the windows, but it appeared as if Will Baum had forgotten nothing; watchful officers cut off his retreat, and he was borne off to far less luxurious lodgings than he had occupied at Winslow House. As he was borne away, John Marsh's tall form loomed before him, and raising his long thin fingers, with an impressive gesture, he said: "God has avenged poor Hester!"

When the tumult which followed his removal had subsided, Baum moved to Jessie, and continued:

"A few words more, Miss Reed, that you may be fully undeceived with regard to Marston. Next to John Marsh, he hated Rutherford; you recollect the day when they were both shot, apparently dead, by your own hearstone on the prairie?"

"Yes—I'm not likely to forget it."

"Marston was returning to the hut when he saw you admit them, and his own child; he lurked about, watching through loop-holes in the logs, and when he heard John begin to tell the little girl's name, he fired at both him and Rutherford. The sight of a man he had once wronged, a few rods from the cabin, forced him to leave his post, and follow Rust into the wilderness. A scuffle ensued, and he could not get back to you for a fortnight, he was so severely injured. His tour to Europe was imaginary—he never went."

"Never went—where was he, then?"

"Obliged to den among the Rocky Mountains, to save himself from exposure and ruin: but Rust has since died, and he therefore dared to venture back. And now, Miss Jessie, you will pardon my boldness, but he was the means of estranging you and Rutherford. If I were up'n sath, I could not speak more truthfully than I am speaking, when I say that he paid his attorney a hundred dollars to write the letter which turned you against Rutherford!"

"God forgive me!" exclaimed the girl, while her tears fell fast; "I can never forgive myself for wronging him thus—never dare ask his pardon."

"My child, my poor child," murmured her father, "this scene is too painful for you. To-morrow we will have another interview with Mr. Baum, provided he will grant it. Good-night, sir; good-night, Holt!" and with a bow to the other ladies and gentlemen in the drawing-room, he led his child away.

(To be continued.)

HOW I BECAME AN ADMIRAL.—In the course of the evidence taken last summer before the Commons' Select Committee on promotion in the navy, Rear-Admiral G. Elliot was examined. After answering a great many questions, the gallant officer said: "I do not like to sit under the possibility of its being supposed that I desire to conceal anything with reference to my own position. If my father had not been an admiral, and if he had not been lucky in holding commands, I should not have been an admiral, or perhaps a captain by this time; but he gave me every promotion that I have had in consequence of death vacancies. My father nominated his son, and in that way I was placed on every occasion over the heads of all those who had not the good fortune of having a father an admiral." He added, in answer to Mr. Ayrton, that he had seen a very inefficient officer promoted in this way, and in answer to a further question, he agreed that probably he and Admiral Grey were the most fortunate officers in the navy. Captain B. J. Sullivan mentioned to the committee an instance of two midshipmen entering the same ship within a year of each other; one of them, still a mate, had afterwards to go to the assistance of the other, whose sleep was on shore, and who, having powerful interest, had been three years a commander. When this latter officer, through interest, became a captain, he had only served seven years from the time of passing, and had

never served a day after being made a captain, although he had great interest to obtain service if he had wished it. He had gone on the Reserved Admirals' List, and has received above £6,000 in the shape of half-pay. Captain Sullivan added that we have never had such fair promotions as in the last two or three years, but that the system does still work of making appointments on account of interest, and that alone, either family or political, and that though the men with interest may have as fair a proportion of good officers among them as the other class, it is very disheartening to deserving officers to see promotions made from interest alone without regard to qualification, and interest alone sufficient to raise men rapidly to the higher ranks.

COUNT D'ARMAGNAC.

A HALF-DARKENED chamber, lofty and spacious, with gorgeous furniture and superb hangings, was entered one afternoon, in the year of cruelty, as it might well be named (the year of the conspiracy against Louis XL, King of France), by two lovely children. On the high bed, lay a lady, thin to emaciation, and with the traces of sickness and sorrow upon her once-beautiful countenance. The sweet boys, one apparently ten years of age, and the other perhaps two or three years younger, ran eagerly to the bedside and climbed up for a kiss.

"Oh, mamma! how we have wanted to see you. But how pale and ill you look. Cannot you rise and come out into the air? Sweetest mother! do not lie here any longer. We are so lonely without you. Louise does not understand our plays, though she is very kind. No Louise," continued the boy, playfully, shaking his finger at a young and comely woman, who sat behind the bed; "no you are not acquainted with them. But then it is not your fault, we know well enough. You had not the same reason to learn them that mamma had—to please her darling boys."

"But I shall learn them, dear François," interrupting the boy. "You and Henri both know that I will do anything in the world, to please you and to give ease of mind to your dear mother."

The boy went straight up to the young woman and gave her his little hand with an air of mingled sweetness and dignity; and said, kindly:

"Yes, Louise, do everything for poor mamma; for she looks very ill, I see."

At this, the little Henri lifted his head from the bed, looked earnestly into his mother's face and burst into tears, when he saw how pale and wan she had become.

At that moment the chamber-door was violently pushed open. Two ill-looking men, in the uniform of the king's guard, entered, strode up to the bedside and laid their rude hands upon the shoulders of the two children. Louise shrieked and ran toward them, as if to shield them. The poor sick lady fainted, and in the confusion, the children were dragged away, carried down-stairs and put into a cart that stood ready at the door.

"My God!" said the young woman. "If my lady should revive and find out that the boys are gone, it will kill her."

She left her charge, ran hastily down a retired passageway and succeeded in reaching the street before the ruffians had succeeded in quieting the agonized boys.

"Louise, Louise!" they cried. "You must find my father, and he will take us away from these wicked men."

"Hush, darlings," said Louise. "They are of the king's guard, and you must submit."

"Ho, ho! my young sprigale," said one of the men; "you call upon your father as if he were not already dead."

"My father is not dead," said little Henri, frowning. "Go, dear Louise; you will find him somewhere in the garden."

"Alas, no," said the anxious girl. "He is not there, nor can I find him. Dear boys, your father is dead."

"Dead, dead?" exclaimed the boy, passionately. "How! when?"

"She told you truly, boy," said one of the men with a cruel sneer. "And if you want to know how and when, the how was by cutting off his head with a bright, broad axe, and the when was four days ago."

While these words were uttered, the boy's figure was drawn up to its utmost height. A tender and sublime expression of grief gave instant place to a stern and heroic determination. He threw his arm around the neck of his brother, and stood up with a firm look as he said:

"Henri! dear Henri! hear me and repeat the words after me. I swear to revenge my father's death, upon the King of France."

Henri could not speak. He was choked by the fast-coming sobs that burst from his heart, and he now lay,

half-insensible, upon his brave little brother's shoulder. At this moment, Louise beckoned them. The men saw the movement, and drove on rapidly, the shock throwing down both the children, and striking poor Henri's curly head against the frame of the cart.

They were gone! Louise could not realise that the guard had taken them from their almost dying mother; but now that she could see them no longer, she was seized with sudden terror for the poor, sick woman she had left alone with her misery. She hastened back to her; and to her eager inquiries, she was obliged to admit the dreadful truth.

Louis, King of France, the eleventh of that name, was a cruel monarch. High souls and brave rebelled against his monstrous oppressions, his unheard-of atrocities. Among these, and, indeed, heading them, was the young and heroic Henri, Count D'Armagnac. They who formed the conspiracy met at night, in a retired building, and pursued their plans with the greatest possible secrecy. When all was, or seemed ripe for action, and the time appeared to be at hand when France should be released from her tenfold curse, the brave conspirators were thunder-stricken by the announcement that they had been betrayed; and that all hope of freeing themselves from tyranny and oppression was vain and futile.

D'Armagnac was the especial foe dreaded by royalty. He was denounced as the ringleader of the revolt; and the noble head was quickly brought to the block. As if this were not enough, his dead body was mangled and made the object of the most awful enormities; and this, by order of a king who disgraced his throne, his country, and his kind.

The young and beautiful countess lay ill with a fever, while her husband was thus endeavouring to break the chain of the tyrant. When, at length, he was arrested and borne away, the fever, aggravated by terror, merged into delirium, and, for ten successive days, the poor countess knew not even her gentle and devoted Louise.

When reason assumed its sway once more, anxiety and suspense drove her nearly back to the state from which she had emerged. Louise, with womanly tact, had taken the two sweet children to her bedside; and then ensued the terrible scene of their departure. Mercifully, in that hour, had God preserved her, by insensibility, from the utter despair of hearing the cruel words spoken by the guard, to the children, respecting their father's awful death. Yet, to the tender and loving Louise was given the task of telling her of all the horrors that had taken place.

Six weeks afterward, a lady, clad in deepest black, attended only by a young girl, similarly attired, waited day after day, a petitioner—almost a hopeless one—in the ante-chamber leading from the audience-hall of King Louis. Patiently they sat, each day, until the doors were closed for the night, without seeming any nearer the object of their desires than before. Dearthly pale was that noble countenance, as if she had been near the dark valley, and had only come back for the little angels she had left. Her eyes incessantly watched the faces that came forth from the audience, hall; but in vain she looked for the signs of gratified wishes.

A tyrant does not know the inexpressible bliss of making hearts and faces happy; and Louis understood nothing of the happiness of having cheerful subjects around him. He delighted in the marks of terror and awe in those who knelt before him, and was never better pleased than when he saw the tearful eye and quivering lip that appealed mutely to the pity which was a stranger to his soul.

The Countess D'Armagnac had a long and dreadful struggle, before she could summon resolution to ask for an interview with her boys; but, at the close of the fifth weary day of watching, when nature was worn out by want of nourishment and sleep, she saw Louis come forth, with the soldiers who formed his body-guard. At that moment all fear, all terror, faded away. She remembered only that she was a mother, and that her children were in the power of this man. Pale as marble, her white hands clenched convulsively in the heavy folds of her black dress, she threw herself upon her knees before him, and, in a voice of touching sweetness, she cried:

"Hear me but for an instant! For God Almighty's sake, if you are a king or a man, hear me!"

The wild words, and the strangeness of her appeal startled Louis. He turned quickly to Frontignac, who was a pace in the rear, and asked who she was that addressed him thus. Frontignac whispered something in his ear, which the king answered aloud:

"Let the woman go home," he said, savagely. "The children shall suffer for their father's treacherous conduct. Away! I will not release them."

Frontignac explained that it was to see them that their mother came; she had not spoken of release.

"Well, then," was the unwilling and ungracious response, "she may see them once, only once, remember that and in your presence."

Overcome with her emotions, the countess nearly fainted before the royal footsteps left the room.

"My mistress! my poor mistress!" said Louise, who had been crouching at a distance, terrified lest the kindly savage should spurn her beloved countess with his heel; for Louise truly thought he might be tempted to indulge in such personal barbarity even toward a woman. She supported her in her arms until the fit had passed away, and then bore her to the carriage.

"To-morrow, to-morrow! Oh, Louise, will to-morrow ever come?" said the fearful woman, many times that evening. Her faithful attendant thought that such was the over-wrought state of her mind, that to-morrow indeed might never come to her. She gave her a quieting draught, put her to bed, and watched over her as one would a sick child, and when at length, the poor countess closed her weary eyes, Louise set about preparing everything for her morrow's visit that could possibly be wanted, so that her mistress should not be troubled when the time came.

It was with difficulty, after all, that Frontignac was able to procure an order for her to enter her children's prison. He delayed coming until her heart was sick with apprehension lest he should deceive her altogether. At last, when she had given way to an agony of tears, he came. Frontignac had worked nobly in her cause—had braved and battled the king's displeasure, and had finally secured the promised order. The countess thanked him on her knees. He entered the carriage with her and they drove to the place of the children's confinement.

Other hands than her own had decked the sweet boys that day. Thank God, familiarity with suffering does not always steel the heart. The jailor was a humane and benevolent man, and his little wife was one of the sweetest specimens of a tender-hearted gentlewoman. Notwithstanding the cruel severity of the orders they had received to keep the children in the closest confinement, they had allowed them a run in the fresh air every day, and had done everything to keep them as comfortable as they were at home. The wife had made them new clothes, suitable to the intense heat which was so oppressive to the little fellows; and, now, decked in these, they were pacing the little flower-garden, impatient to welcome their mother.

"And she will take us home, surely, François?" asked Henri, with the undoubting faith of childhood sitting serenely on his brow.

"I hope she will," answered his brother. Two years of added experience in the elder, had already given him a deeper insight into things than little Henri could lay claim to. His confidence in the king was all gone, and but for the few other friends who had remained true to his mother, he would have believed none were good.

It must have been a touching spectacle, when she, whom they had last seen upon a sick-bed, dragged her weary limbs into their prison house. For a few moments, both mother and children were speechless; then the long-pent emotion spent itself in an agony of sobs and tears that seemed to threaten each frail life with dissolution. François, the brave boy, was the first to speak.

"My mother, my sweet, darling mother!" he exclaimed, "do not weep so. It breaks my heart. Remember, I am going soon to be a man, and I can protect you then from this cruel, wicked king."

"Hush, my boy," said Frontignac; "it will not do to talk treason here. Even the walls have ears, and your punishment may be rendered doubly worse to bear than now. I speak as a friend," he added, "for I would not willingly suffer a hair of your heads to be injured."

Louise here whispered to the boys, that it was to this man they owed the interview with their mother; upon which François gave him his hand, and thanked him fervently for conferring upon them so great a pleasure. It had brightened up their gloomy room, to see their mother's sweet face within it.

"Dearest mother!" said timid, bashful Henri, "I wish you would do or say something against the king, and then he would send you here. Then we should be happy together."

Two hours had gone by, no one knowing how; and Frontignac was compelled to own that his orders had already been exceeded. He had, at the commencement of the interview, retired to the furthest part of the room, so as not to be any restraint upon the emotions of mother or children; and he had kindly extended the time beyond the prescribed bounds. Yet he had seen, with an aching heart, the distress and agony of the countess, which, outwardly, she had tried so desperately to restrain. Was this, indeed, the last time she would behold these darling boys? The thought came with crushing weight upon her soul. To be so desolate! so desolate!

All this Frontignac saw; and, for a moment, was tempted to renounce all allegiance to a monarch who could thus torture widowed hearts. These sweet boys, too! He could almost look into their future and behold youth blighted, hopes destroyed, and joy for ever

disappointed—"a doubt, an anguish, a despair" for their whole lives.

During the children's imprisonment, the most lively interest in them had been taken by the jailor's good little wife, Mary Arnaut. She had infected her husband with this feeling, until he had grown tender as a woman toward them; and, had it not been for their distress at the separation from their mother, the boys would have scarcely missed anything for their comfort, so well did she care for their physical wants. This was very soothing to the countess to hear; but the arrow was doing its work quickly in that poor heart. She faded, after this interview, rapidly, and in a few weeks, she had gone "where lords and kings are known no more."

When all was over, Louise went to the prison and entreated Madame Arnaut to take her as a servant, that she might sometimes see the children.

"See them!" was the little woman's exclamation. "You shall attend upon them constantly if you wish. I will pay you wages sufficiently to enable you to buy them the comforts which you know, better than I, will suit them, and I shall feel happy and relieved when you are here."

When the first burst of grief was over, the boys seemed almost joyful that their poor mother had passed away, since, as Louise told them, she was nearly distracted with sorrow for them, and had made herself very ill.

"It cannot be very long," said Henri, "that this cruel king can torment any of us. François, darling! we shall soon go to her."

His words were prophetic, as far as regarded himself. He lived but a short time after his mother; and then, the loving child and faithful servant became all in all to each other.

A disease, brought on by confinement, had wasted the boy's limbs before they had attained to manhood; and for long years he lingered and wasted slowly in his dungeon, Louise looking on, powerless to cure, but eager to alleviate.

"François, darling! look up!" was the joyful cry of Louise, in his dull ear, one day when he had slept long and heavily. "Look up and listen. The king is dead!"

"The king? Who is he?"

Louise burst into tears. The glad news of freedom had come too late. His mind was unable to receive it. Arnaut went up to him.

"You are the Count D'Armagnac now," he said, slowly and distinctly; "your estates are restored to you, and you are free to leave this place."

"Are you all going away?" he asked, feebly. "Oh, don't leave me. Take me with you."

No assurance that he was free seemed to reach him. Tyranny had done its cruel work upon the noble heart, and death had only to complete the sacrifice.

The morning light was shining gaily into Madame Arnaut's pleasant little parlour, when they led in the released captive, and laid him upon the couch. It came quivering through leaves and flowers, upon his face, and bright birds flew in upon his pillow. He smiled, like a little child. Louise and Madame Arnaut both went up to the couch. He took a hand of each, laid them upon his wasted bosom, and so fell asleep, to wake among the angels!

W. B. O.

THE EFFECT OF LIGHTNING.—During a recent storm, a cottage at Stroud was struck by the lightning. The lightning struck the earthenware chimney-pot of the cottage, shivered it to atoms, and scattered the brickwork in which it was fixed in all directions, from 20 to 30 yards. Some of the bricks were picked up in a ploughed field adjoining, reduced to small fragments. It then burst through the roof of the room in which the man and his wife were sleeping, scattering the stone tiles far and wide, and leaving a large aperture; it then literally blew out the casement of the bedroom, fusing the lead, and, as it were, exploding it; for on a muslin curtain drawn before the window inside, were driven numbers of small particles of lead, giving it the appearance of being spangled with silver. Some of the larger pieces had scorched the muslin, and it was with some difficulty that any of them were picked off. In its course to the earth the electric discharge then splintered a strong oak plinth of the window below, and treated the window itself as it had the one upstairs, the glass and lead being forced out into the garden. All the surrounding masonry was dislodged, especially some in which an iron boiler was imbedded, and the house was a perfect ruin. In the room upstairs, on an open shelf close to the head of the bed in which the couple were sleeping, were two hats, one in a blue bandbox, the other standing close by. The bandbox was in a direct line between the hole in the roof and the casement. It was torn to shreds, as if subjected for an hour to the gnawing of a mischievous dog. The hat itself—a new one—lay in the midst of

these fragments, crushed up as if some one had tried to squeeze it into a ball. The other hat was uninjured. The good man and his wife were of course aroused. He thought a cannon had been discharged; she immediately exclaimed she was being suffocated with sulphur, and they soon discovered the dismantled state of their abode.

DECREASE OF POPULATION IN CALIFORNIA.

THE vote at the recent election shows that California is being rapidly depleted of her population. There is little doubt that the vote was a full one, as it followed an exciting campaign, in which both parties exerted themselves to their utmost to bring out their party strength.

The cities and towns throughout the State, with exception of San Francisco, shew the effects of the depletion. They are barren, dull, and declining. Business houses may be seen on every hand, with closed doors. Property has declined at a fearful rate, and may be bought almost for a song.

The causes of this depletion are numerous. The most powerful one is the discovery of rich and extensive mines of silver and gold, outside the limits of the State. There has, for the past two years, been a perfect exodus to Nevada territory, from all parts of California. Probably not less than 30,000 people are now residents of this territory, who came here from California. The discovery of rich mines in Idaho territory has attracted thousands to that locality. The Colorado mines, now coming into notoriety, are taking off hundreds, and will, in all probability, carry away thousands another year. In addition to this, many have gone to Mexico, and engaged in mining there. Several thousand soldiers have been taken from the State. Taking all together, it probably would not be extravagant to say that the last two years does not fall short of 50,000 souls.

It is true that there has been a continual stream of immigration to that State from the east; but the amount of immigration is, probably, not one-third as much as the emigration. Hence the decline of the cities and towns, and the dulness which is apparent throughout the State.

The only hope we see for a return of the prosperity which marked the career of that State is in the copper mines, which are being vigorously prospected throughout its length. If they prove rich and extensive, they will attract a large population, and will give employment to thousands of labouring men. This, in turn, will give a fresh impetus to trade, and sustain the cities and villages.

The Placer mines, which were such a sudden source of wealth a few years ago, are exhausted; and now gold mining is confined almost entirely to quartz and hydraulic, both of which require capital, and are, therefore, confined to moneyed men and companies. These are not extensive enough to employ so large a population as the Placer digging formerly did. This exhaustion of surface diggings created a surplus of population, which has been taken away by new discoveries elsewhere.

As much as California has suffered in this respect, the drain will continue for years to come. Nevada Territory is but yet very partially prospected. Her rich fields must attract many more thousands of the enterprising, and they will come principally from California. The same may be said with reference to Arizona.

But Providence has wisely created a dependence of the surrounding country on the fertile lands of California. They must feed the miners; and in this way there is a partial recompense for the losses sustained. Not many years will elapse before there will be a necessity for the cultivation of every foot of arable land in the great valleys lying between her mountains. The tule-lands, if they can be reclaimed, will be made to yield to the ploughshare.

SMITHFIELD.—Preparations are being made for the commencement of the works for the construction of the Dead Meat and Poultry Market, Smithfield, London. The houses and buildings extending from the corner of Smithfield Bars to West Street, including the Ram Inn and several houses in Smithfield Bars, are being hoarded in. The materials will be sold, and the houses razed to the ground. The remains of the sheep and pig pens will also be removed, and the site cleared for the above purpose.

THE "BOKE OF ST. ALBAN'S."—In *Notes and Queries* are some curious particulars of the more modern history of this very ancient book. About fifty years since it belonged to the library of the Hickman's, of Thonock Hall, Gainsborough, and was cast aside, with other "rubbish," because it had not a handsome binding, and, indeed, was without boards at all. A gardener named Naylor, who dabbled in books, got leave to appropriate some of the rubbish, and the *Boko* of St. Alban's, which was amongst it, long lay on a kitchen shelf, till the housewife got tired of perpetu-

ally dusting it, and the book was sold for ninepence, being nine pounds weight, at a penny per lb. It afterwards got into hands a little less unappreciative of its great value, and sold for three shillings. Again it changed hands for two guineas; and again, for seven guineas, to a knowing bookseller named Stark, who was doubtless considered a fool for doing so, but who took it to London, and sold it to the Right Hon. T. Grenville for between seventy and eighty guineas. It is now in Showcase VIII., in the King's Library of the British Museum, and bears the following label:—"The book of St. Alban's. The books of Hankyng and Huntynge, and also of Coot armuris. Written by Dame Juliana Barnes, or Berners, Prioresse of Sopwell Nunnery. Printed at St. Albans in 1486. Bequeathed by the Rt. Hon. Thomas Grenville."

THE KING-TAMER.

CHAPTER I.

THE yellow radiance of the full tropic moon bathed land and sea; the waves softly dashed against the shining sands; palms and cocoas were distinctly defined against the clear blue summer night sky; and every breath of the murmuring breeze brought a fresh burden of delicious aroma to the young couple slowly pacing the moonlit, stone-paved court of Cape Coast Castle, the residence of the English governor-general in Africa.

When Major Schele left his native land to assume the duties of the office to which he had been appointed by his queen, his brave-hearted wife resolved to accompany him; and with them went also the major's young and beautiful orphan niece, sweet Annie Lisle, whose home had been in his household since her soldier father fell in the wars of India. And a blessing, indeed, in the loneliness of their home in this foreign clime, proved the bright-eyed, vivacious English girl, adapting herself to the many privations of their mode of living without a murmur, and adding life to the quiet rooms of that old castle by the sea.

When they had been at Cape Town some three years, an English vessel brought out an assistant to Major Schele—Captain Reid, a young and intelligent soldier, whose coming was hailed with joy, not only by the governor, but by the ladies of the castle; and with the passage of a year, during which the young officer and the beautiful maiden were daily thrown into each other's society, isolated as they were from all the world beside, it was not strange that a strong affection had ripened between them, and that they were now plighted lovers.

And often, as on this beautiful summer night, beneath the splendid tropic moonlight, the two slowly paced the stone court shaded by the verandah of the castle, weaving dreams of a happy future, or recalling scenes of their distant English home across the sea.

Annie Lisle seemed to have caught something of the effluence of Southern life from her residence there. Her form, arrayed in the thin muslin suited to the climate, was full and perfectly modelled; her dark-brown hair was ornamented with a rich blossom plucked from the trailing vine that overran the courtyard trellis; and over her shoulders was thrown a crimson scarf, whose vivid hue was hardly softened in the mellow moonlight. Her companion was tall and athletic, with fine open features and noble mien, bearing the stamp of the true English gentleman on his brow; and now he gazed with tenderness and manly pride upon the beautiful girl walking by his side.

"A truce to sad thoughts to-night, dear Annie!" said the lover playfully, as they paused a moment and leaned upon the wall, while Annie's eyes were bent out upon the broad ocean beyond. "Why so pensive? Thinking of the old home beyond the waters? Well, I hope the time is not far distant when we may all see old England again, and in some quiet spot we may pass our happy wedded life. This is an important post, I know; but I fancy that your uncle would not repine at the prospect of exchanging his honors of the governorship for a look at old Albion's shores again. What say you, Annie?"

"That, for one, I shall be glad when the time comes for our return. Uncle expects it now. He thinks a change in the ministry will bring a new appointment; and would not be surprised any day at the arrival of a vessel with the new governor and our recall. But you were a little in fault in reading my thoughts to-night, dear Percy; and will smile when I tell you that I was not thinking of home."

"Of what then, my Annie?" queried the young officer, playfully. "Of that handsome Kaffre chief, dressed in the height of African fashion, with the monkey-tail bracelets and the hide girdle, who came to visit us the other day, and who forthwith forgot his pacific errand to the governor in his admiration of the governor's niece? I warn you, Annie, that I shall be

jealous of this Kaffre Adonis—Pangbo, I think, by name, and chief of his great and warlike tribe by title, and may be tempted to forestall his claims by calling in the nearest English missionary to marry us ere you have an opportunity to test the fascination of my rival."

Annie met her lover's raillery with a smile, and replied:

"Mistaken again, Sir Jealous; though I acknowledge that you have some cause for disquiet—for did not my warlike admirer, in addition to gallant glances, lay at my feet gifts that would quite captivate a Kaffre lady; to wit an elephant's tusk, two calabashes of wild honey, a basket of maize, and another of ground-nuts, thus defrauding my good uncle of his presents in right of his governorship? But, as I say, you are in error in regard to my thoughts; for, instead of indulging in a reverie over my own conquests, I was forestalling your talked-of elephant-hunt on the morrow, and contemplated using my persuasions against your joining it."

"What! not coaxing up presentiments of harm to come to me, my little croaker!" laughed Reid. "Why should I not go to the grand elephant-hunt to-morrow?"

"No, I am not idly conjuring evil, Percy," and in her reply the loving woman spoke now, while the playful raillery of the girl vanished. "Uncle really assures me that it is dangerous sport, and that even the natives are often injured by the wounded and enraged animal—so don't make light of it, I pray you, Percy!"

"Oh, never fear for me, darling!" replied Captain Reid, bestowing a kiss with his answer. "Give me a half-dozen trusty steel spears, and I am sure to render my game incapacitated from pursuing me very successfully; though I confess I have rarely taken part in this exciting pursuit, for the natives have a way of hurling their javelins that I never could acquire did I care to aid in destroying the noblest animal that kings it over the southern jungles. But our visitor of to-day—the great and renowned Pangbo—gave me most courteous and urgent invitations to attend the morrow's hunt, so I think it would hardly be quite polite to disappoint him. Etiquette is etiquette, you know, Annie, whether in King Kaffre's wilderness or at our Lady Queen's court."

"Then I resign you to the tender mercies of the elephant-hunters. May my admirer—good Pangbo Jumbo—prove a hospitable host when the day's adventures are over," laughingly replied the girl, though she did not fail to add a woman's caution, "not to trust himself too near the wounded animal," which seemed to be her principal fear.

"Thanks for your caution, dear Annie," answered Reid. "I see what a careful, solicitous little wife I am to be favoured with one of these days; and, like King Kaffre, shall bring you back one of the elephant's tusks as a trophy of my success."

With a blushing laugh, Annie rallied from his words, and waived the subject, saying:

"What a splendid night this is, Percy! The moonlight is almost like the day in colder climes. Those cocoa and betel-nut trees—one can almost trace every glossy leaf against the blue background of the sky; and, from out the depths of yonder jungle, what sweet winds, laden with the odour of the wild grape, come straying! And the sea—how softly, and with what gentle murmurs, it washes to the base of those grey walls. It is a night of beauty, Percy," and she leaned against the parapet, gazing around with intense delight.

"Yes, Annie, a beautiful clime indeed; but we must not allow the splendour of the night to induce us to forget that moonlight is not always favourable to health, or that malaria may lurk in the mildest atmosphere. Let us go in," and the young pair crossed the courtyard and disappeared within the walls of the castle.

CHAPTER II.

WITH the early morning beams the party of Kaffres who, headed by their chief, a great warrior, who had come from his own village toward the interior on an errand of treaty with the white governor, had encamped by night without the castle, arose and made preparations to set out on the day's elephant-hunt. The young captain had been long anxious to know something of the native sports, and had gladly acceded to the invitation of the chief to accompany them; and, trusting in the tribe whose mission to the coast was of so pacific a nature, Reid felt no anxiety for his own safety.

And so, in the early day, the party set out on their expedition—the chief, Pangbo, surrounded by some two score of his tribe and the brave Captain Reid—all well armed with the sharp steel assagays (darts) which the natives hurl upon their prey in their hunts.

Striking into the interior, they left the castle and the town behind them: crossed a little stream, twink-

ling away with a musical cadence, entered a deep valley which they traversed, then wound their way among its boundary of marble-quarried hills. The fleet antelope, startled from its retreat, fled past them with the speed of the wind; herds of buffaloes eyed them from afar, then rushed, bellowing, across the level plate of table-land; and monkeys, paroquets, and mocking-birds leaped and chattered in the thick trees.

Tropic birds of every plumage, francolins, turtle-doves, the honey-guide, the makwa-reza, and a hundred other denizens of the dense forests sent out their sweet notes upon the morning air, only hushed when the hot sun rose higher over the wilderness, and sent them to the quiet of their leafy nests. As the day lengthened, Captain Reid began to despair of participating in the hunt; but at length the Kaffres gave a low, warning cry, and, looking forward through an opening between the hills, he beheld a noble elephant standing under a large cocoa-tree, fanning herself with her long ears. The excitement of the hunters was intense; the chief gave the order to advance, and shortly they were in the vicinity of the noble animal, who stood unconscious of their approach.

Then commenced their peculiar mode of attack. The Kaffres began piping through their reed tubes to arouse the beast to a knowledge of their neighbourhood; then they sang a rude address, with the chorus ending:

"O chief! chief! we have come to kill you!

O chief! chief! we have come to eat you!

O chief! many more will die beside you!"

ending with simultaneously hurling their steel javelins full upon the head and sides of the noble elephant doomed to fall their prey.

At first the animal had started into a run; but, goaded by fresh spears that pierced her, she turned and charged her tormentors, striking furiously with her trunk. But the hunters were agile and wary, and Captain Reid took heed to keep beyond range of attack. At length, after an hour's combat, the huge beast staggered and fell upon her knees, then sank dead, upon the ground.

The Kaffres eagerly secured the ivory tusks, a valued article of barter with the English residents on the coast—cut off portions of the meat for food, then kindled a fire, and feasted upon it. When the meal was ended, the sun was on his downward slope; and the chief proposed that the young white governor should pass the night in his village to which they were now approaching.

To this Reid willingly assented, for the day's adventure had wearied him; and when the moon rose round and full through the trees, they entered a low valley surrounded by hills; and after a supper of ground millet cake and wild honey, Captain Reid lay down on a buffalo skin and slept soundly all the night.

When the morning broke, he sprang up, refreshed, to find the tribe already awake and scattered about the village; and King Pangbo ready to do the honours of host for the day. It was Reid's first thought, that he ought to set out immediately on his return; but the desire to witness some of the customs of the natives in their own wilds urged him to prolong his stay one day longer, and, on the morrow, set out for the coast.

The forenoon hours passed in a variety of entertainments, in which the chief endeavoured to impress his visitor with ideas of the greatness and power of his tribe; and when the noon sun was flooding the high hills around the valley, and burnishing the glossy green coronals of the palms and cocoas on their slopes, the chief led his guest to a seat upon a green knoll at a little distance from the huts, and then retired within his own royal habitation built of bamboo stalks, and thatched with plantain-leaves of giant growth.

"King Pangbo will appear in all his royal finery—an extra ox-tail for anklets on his kingly legs, and a fresh daub of vermilion on his sinewy chest. I half-wish Annie were here to share the honours my entertainer is heaping upon me!" soliloquized Reid, gazing about with a smile, and lightly striking the sward grass at his feet with a slender bamboo reed he held in his hand. "But I am the only minister plenipotentiary here at the Kaffre's court. Ha! here he comes, retired in his reception-costume. What is to happen now? A war-dance, I imagine, by the way he paces off the ground, and by the flexible bend of his Kaffre knees."

With a quick bound, the stalwart chieftain had leaped from his hut towards Captain Reid. He was arrayed in his war-dress—a skin cap with gay plumes, tufts of ox-hide, smeared with red and blue paint, around his waist and upon his breast, anklets and bracelets of the same hide, and he bore a large shield of bamboo-wood upon his left arm, holding in his right hand four long steel assagays with lance-like tips. His aspect was ferocious and wild in the extreme.

Captain Reid looked on in wonder; for he had never before seen a native King in full costume; and

only when the Kaffre paused before him, bent upon him a malignant glance of hate, and selecting one of the spear-pointed assegays, raised it in his right hand, and poised himself, as if about to hurl it at Captain Reid's heart; only then did a wild suspicion leap like lightning through Percy Reid's brain.

"Good God! am I betrayed? Has this savage enticed me here, unarmed, to murder me in cold blood?" rushed through his mind, and for a moment he quivered like an aspen-leaf, yet more with the horror of the discovery than with fear, for the soldier had faced death many times on the field of India, and shrunk not from it. But to die here—in these jungle wilds—alone—with his promised bride to vainly await his return—it was too sickening!

Like a desperate man he roused himself; a flood of thoughts rushed through his mind—and, like a drowning man grasping at straws, he caught at an idea that swam uppermost on the tide of thoughts in his brain.

"I have heard it said that the gaze of the human eye will tame the lion in his fiercest moods—I will conquer this savage with a look!" and he bent the full, concentrated gaze of his dark, bright hazel eyes upon the Kaffre chieftain.

Long—like an age it seemed to Captain Reid, though in reality but a few moments had passed—long, it seemed, while he held the savage at bay with the eagle power of his gaze; while the sinewy arm was poised aloft, and the bright spear glittered in the sun, and that fierce, malignant face frowned down upon him; then, little by little, softened, till it took on something like a human look once more. For, thank God! the experiment was successful; the fascination of Captain Reid's fixed look, the unmoved muscles of his countenance, the dauntlessness of his mien, all combined to conquer the savage of the wilds, even as the lion-tamer quells the king of the forest, or the snake-charmer renders powerless the serpent's fang.

Dropping the steel assegay to the ground, King Pangbo turned away; and when he again approached Captain Reid, there was the crushed, tamed look of a slave in his eyes. Then he darted away toward his hut; and shortly reappeared with a number of his tribe, with whom he paced the mad measures of a wild war-dance till they ceased, exhausted with the violent exercise.

When Captain Reid lay down on his buffalo-skin that night, there was little fear in his heart, for, by a kind of intuition, he divined that the chief would not now harm him; and when, next day, he parted from the Kaffres, who escorted him back to the sea-coast, King Pangbo placed in his hand a rare and costly wrought necklace of ivory, saying:

"Go home! give this to white governor's young lady you soon marry for wife!"

Captain Reid was duly welcomed back by his friends, who had become anxious at his prolonged absence; but when he had recounted the success of the elephant-hunt, and his visit to the Kaffre village (only withholding his brief experience with the savage Pangbo) he displayed the ivory necklace, and said:

"And so, Annie, you see I was not injured at the hunt, and returned with new gifts from your kindly admirer."

But not until after his marriage with sweet Annie Lisle, which was celebrated shortly after the return of Governor Schele to England, did Captain Reid, over the ivory necklace which he one day lifted from his wife's jewel case on her dressing-table, find courage to relate that thrilling experience in African wilds, when, by the powerful fascination of his eye, he foiled the murderous intent of the treacherous Kaffre king, and tamed him into humanity again. M. W. J.

THE MOON.—Professor Phillips has succeeded in obtaining drawings of the moon seen through a new telescope with a 6-inch object glass. They exhibit many new and striking features, showing a volcanic action of which we of this world have no conception. What should we think if our whole continent was a collection of craters, with hills rising out of their midst, and divided by radiating ravines of awful depth? The only approach to any such scenery in our world is to be found in the Cordilleras of our gold regions.

By a Roman law, called *Lex Voconia*, enacted A.U.C. 524, no woman could inherit an estate; and no rich person could leave more than a fourth part of his personal property to a female. The principal object of this was to prevent the decay or extinction of illustrious families. Various arts were used in evasion. Sometimes a fortune was left in trust to a friend, who might give it to a daughter or other female relative; but this friend could not be legally forced to do so, unless he pleased. The law itself, like many others, fell into disuse on account of its severity, and was abrogated by Augustus. The wills of minors were valid in Rome; with us, the testator must be twenty-one. Roman testaments were always written in Latin; a legacy, if expressed in Greek, was null and

void. The original document, of which there were usually several copies, was deposited, either privately in the hands of a friend, or publicly, in a temple, under charge of the appointed guardian of the building. The will of Julius Caesar, so familiar to us, as recited by Mark Antony, in Shakespeare's tragedy, was intrusted to the eldest of the Vestal Virgins.

SELF-MADE;

"OUT OF THE DEPTHS."

By Mrs. E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH.

Author of "The Hidden Hand," "The Lost Heiress," &c., &c.

CHAPTER LXXV.

WHY CLAUDIA WAS ALONE.

Be not amazed at life. 'Tis still
The mode of God with his elect:
Their hopes exactly to fulfil,
In times and ways they least expect.

Who marry as they choose, and choose
Not as they ought, they mock the priest,
And leaving out obedience, lose
The finest flavour of the feast.

Coventry Patmore.

ISHMAEL stood transfixed to the spot—for a moment, —and then breaking the spell with which the sound of Claudia's voice had bound him, he passed into the hall, took his hat from the rack, and said to Jim, who was still in attendance there:

"Give my respects to your master and say that I have an engagement this evening that obliges me to withdraw. And give him my adieu."

But, Mr. Ishmael, sir, you will wait for tea? Lady Vincent is here, sir, just arrived," began Jim, with the affectionate freedom of a petted servant.

But Ishmael had left the hall to keep his promise of spending the evening with Reuben and Hannah.

Claudia, standing by her father's side in the library, had also heard the sound of Ishmael's voice, as he spoke to the servant in the hall; and she suddenly ceased talking, and looked as if turned to stone.

"Why, what is the matter, my dear?" inquired the judge, surprised at the panic into which she had been cast.

"Papa, he here?" she said.

"Who?"

"Ishmael!"

"Yes. Why?"

"Papa, make some excuse and get rid of him. I must not, cannot, will not meet him now!" she exclaimed in a half-breathless voice of ill-suppressed excitement.

The judge looked at his daughter, wistfully, painfully, for a moment, and then, as something like the truth in regard to Claudia's feelings broke upon him, he replied very gravely:

"My dear, you need not meet him; and he has saved me the embarrassment of sending him away. He has gone, if I mistake not."

"If you 'mistake' not! There must be no question of this, sir! See! and if he has not gone, tell him to go directly!"

"Claudia!"

"Oh, papa, I am nearly crazy! Go!"

The judge stepped out into the hall and made the necessary inquiries.

And Jim gave Ishmael's message.

With this the judge returned to Claudia.

"He is gone. And now, my dear, I wish to know why it is that you are here alone? I never in my life heard of such a thing! Where is Vincent?"

"Papa, I am nearly fainting with fatigue! Will you ring for one of the women to show Ruth my room? I suppose I have my old one?" she said, throwing herself back in her chair.

"Why—no, my dear; I fancy I saw Katy and the maids decorating the suit of rooms on the opposite side of the hall on this floor, for you! I'll see."

"Anywhere, anywhere—'out of the world,'" sighed Claudia, as the judge sharply rang the bell.

Jim answered it.

"Tell Katy to show Lady Vincent's maid to her ladyship's chamber, and do you see the luggage taken there."

Jim bowed and turned to go.

"Stop," said the judge. "Claudia, my dear, what refreshment will you take before you go up? A glass of wine? a cup of tea?" he inquired, looking anxiously upon the harassed countenance and languid figure of his daughter.

"A cup of coffee, papa, if they have any ready; if not, anything they can bring quickest."

"A cup of coffee for Lady Vincent in one minute, ready or not ready!" was the somewhat unreasonable command of the judge.

Jim disappeared to deliver his master's orders.

And it seemed that the coffee was ready, for he

almost immediately re-appeared, bearing a tray with the service arranged upon it.

"Is it strong, Jim?" inquired Claudia, as she raised the cup to her lips.

"Yes, miss—ma'am—my ladyship, I mean!" said poor Jim, who was excessively bothered by Claudia's new title and the changes that were rung upon it.

The coffee must have been strong, to judge by its effects upon Claudia.

"Take it away," she said, after having drank two cupsful. "Papa, I feel better; and while Ruth is unpacking my clothes, I may just as well sit here and tell you why, if indeed I really know why, I am here alone. We were where we had intended to remain throughout this month of September. All the world seemed to know where we were and how long we intended to stay."

"Well! Lady Vincent cannot consistently find fault with that," said the judge, with a covert smile.

"Because Lady Vincent shares the folly or has shared it," said Claudia; "but Lord Vincent certainly did find fault with it—great fault—much greater fault than was necessary, I thought, and grieved incessantly at the custom of registering names at the hotels."

"Bless his impudence!"

"Papa, we should have quarrelled upon this subject in our honeymoon, if I had had respect enough for him to hold any controversy with him!"

"Claudia!"

"Well, I cannot help it, papa! I must speak out somewhere and to some one! Where so well as here; and to whom as well as to you?"

"You have not yet told me why you are here alone. And I assure you, Claudia, that the fact gives me uneasiness; it is unusual! unprecedented!"

"I am telling you, papa. One morning while I was sitting alone in our private parlour, when our mail was brought in—your letter for me, and three letters for 'my lord.'—Of the latter the first bore the postmark of Banff, the second that of Liverpool, and the third, that of York. They were all superscribed by the same hand, a delicate female hand; all were evidently from the same person. After turning them over and over in my hand and in my mind, I came to the conclusion that the first dated was written to announce the writer as starting upon a journey; that the second was to announce the landing at Liverpool; and the third, the arrival at York; and that these letters, though posted at different times and places, had, by the irregularities of the mails, happened to arrive at their final destination the same day. Lord Vincent has a mother and several sisters; yet I felt very sure that the letters never came from either of them; because, in fact, I had seen the handwriting of each in their letters to him. While I was still wondering over these rather mysterious letters, my lord lounged into the room."

"I handed him the letters, the Banff one being on the top. As soon as he saw the handwriting, he gave vent to various exclamations of annoyance, such as I had never heard from a gentleman, and scarcely ever expected to hear from a lord. 'Bosh!' 'Bother!' 'Here's a go.' 'Set fire to her, do,' being among the most harmless and refined. But presently he saw the postmarks of Liverpool and York on the other letters, and after tearing them open and devouring their contents, he gave way to a fury of passion that positively appalled me. Papa! he cursed and swore like a pirate in a storm!"

"At you?"

"At me? I think not," answered Claudia, haughtily; "but at some person or persons unknown. However, as he forgot himself so far as to give vent to his passion in my presence, I got up and retired to my chamber. Presently he came in, gracefully apologized for his violence; did not explain the cause of it, however; but requested me to give orders for the packing of our trunks, and be ready to leave in one hour."

"Did he give you no reason for his sudden movement?"

"Not until I inquired; then he gave me the general, convenient, unsatisfactory reason, 'business.' In an hour we were off to York. But now, papa, comes the singular part of the affair. When we reached the city, instead of driving to one of the best hotels, as had always been his custom, he drove to quite an inferior place, and registered our names 'Captain and Mrs. Jenkins.'"

"What on earth did he do that for?"

"How can I tell? When I made the same inquiry of him, he merely answered that he was tired of being trumpeted to the world. The next day he left me alone in that stupid place and went out on his 'business' whatever that was! And when he returned in the evening he told me that the 'business' was happily concluded; and that we might as well go on at once to Tangierwood, to pay our promised visit to you. I very readily acceded to that proposition, for, papa, I was pining to see you!"

"My dear child!" said the judge with emotion.

"So next morning we started, and were just comfortably seated in one of the best carriages, when Lord Vincent caught sight of some one on the platform. And papa, with a muttered curse he started up and hurried away, throwing behind me the hasty words, 'I'll be back soon.' Five, ten, fifteen minutes passed, and he did not come! And while I was still anxiously looking for him, the train started. It was the express and came all the way through! And that is why myself and attendants are here alone."

"All this seems very strange, Claudia!" said the judge with a troubled countenance.

"Yes, very."

"What do you make of it? Of course, you, knowing more of the circumstances, are better able to judge than I am."

"Papa, I do not know!"

"Who was it that he caught sight of on the platform?"

"A tall, handsome, imperious-looking woman, between thirty and forty years of age, I should say; a sort of Cleopatra; very dark, very richly dressed. She was looking at him intently when he caught sight of her and rushed out as I said."

"And you can make nothing of it?"

"Nothing!"

"A bad business Claudia! all this grieves me much. You have been but two months married and you return to me alone and your husband is among the missing! A bad, bad business, Claudia!" said the judge, very gravely.

"Not so bad as your words would seem to imply, papa. At least, I hope not! I am inclined to think the detention was accidental; and that Lord Vincent will yet soon arrive," said Claudia.

"But how coolly and dispassionately you speak of an uncertainty that would drive any other woman almost mad. At this moment you do not know whether you are abandoned or not, and to be candid with you, you do not seem to care!" said the judge, sternly.

"Papa, what I paid down my liberty for, this rank I mean, is safe! And so, whether he goes or stays, I am Lady Vincent; and nothing but death can prevent my becoming Countess of Hurst-Monceaux and a peeress," said Claudia defiantly, as she arose and drew her shawl around her shoulders, and looked about herself.

"What is it that you want, my dear?" inquired the judge.

"Nothing! I was taking a view of the old familiar objects! How much has happened since I saw them last! It seems to me as if many years had passed since that time. Well, papa, I suppose Ruth has unpacked and put away my clothes by this time, and so I will leave you for the present."

"And with a weary, listless air, Claudia left the room and turned to go up-stairs."

"Not there! not there, my dear, I told you. The rooms on this floor have been prepared for you!" said the judge, who had followed her to the door.

With a sigh, Claudia turned and crossed the hall and entered the "parlour-chamber" as the large bedroom adjoining the morning room was called.

Ruth was hanging the last dresses in the wardrobe, and Jim was shouldering the last empty trunk to take it away.

"I have left out the silver grey *glacé*, for you to wear this evening, if you please, my lady," said Ruth, indicating the dress that lay upon the bed.

"That will do, Ruth!" answered her mistress, whose thoughts were now not on dresses, but on that time when Ishmael, for her sake, lay wounded, bleeding and almost dying on that very bed.

CHAPTER LXXVI

HOLIDAY.

Had like a kind hand on my brow

Come this fresh breeze,

Cooling its dull and feverish glow,

While through my being seems to flow

The breath of a new life—the healing of the seas;

Good-bye to pain and care! I take

Mine ease to-day;

Here where these sunny waters break,

And ripples this keen breeze, I shake

All burdens from the heart, all weary thoughts away.

With every nerve, vein and artery throbbing with excitement, Ishmael hurried away from the house that contained Claudia.

The solitary walk through the thick woods calmed his emotion, before he reached the Woodside.

He found a tidy room, a tempting tea-table, and smiling faces waiting to welcome him.

"That's my boy!" exclaimed Reuben, coming forward and grasping his hand, "I told Hannah to keep the tea back a spell, cause I knowed you wouldn't disappoint us."

"As if I ever thought you would, Ishmael! Reuben is always prophesying things that can't fail to

come true, like the rising of the sun in the east every day, and so forth! And he expects to get credit for his foresight," said Hannah, taking her seat before the steaming tea-pot, and calling upon the others to sit down.

"Well, that was rather a surprise, as met you and the judge, when you came home from church, wasn't it?" inquired Reuben, as he began to cut slices from the cold ham.

"You knew of the arrival, then?" questioned Ishmael.

"Why, bless you, yes! Why, laws, you know, the carriage passed right by here, and stopped to water the horses, afore going on to Tanglewood. But look here! There was nobody in it but Mrs. Vincent—blame my head!—I mean Mrs. Lord Vincent—and her city maid."

"Lady Vincent, Reuben! how many times will I have to tell you that?" said Hannah, impatiently.

"All right, Hannah, my dear; I'll remember next time! Ishmael, my boy, I think you got all your intellects from Hannah! You certainly didn't get 'em from me. Well, as I was a saying of, there was no one inside except Mrs. Lord—I mean Mrs. Lady Vincent and her city waiting-maid. And on the outside, a-sitting alongside o' the driver was a gentleman, as Jim, as happened to be here, introduced to me as Mr. Frisbie, Lord Vincent's vallysham, whatever that may be."

"Body-servant, Reuben," said his monitress.

"Servant! Well, if he was a servant, I don't know nothink! Why, there ain't a gentlesman in the county as dresses as fine and puts on as many airs!"

"That is quite likely, Uncle Reuben; but for all that, Frisbie is Lord Vincent's servant," said Ishmael.

"Well, how's ever that may be, there he was alongside o' the driver. But what staggers of me is, that there wasn't no Lord Vincent nowhere to be seen! He was 'mong the missin'. And that was the rummest go as ever was! A new bride a comin' home to her 'pa without no bridegroom. And so I jest axed Mr. Frisbie, Esq., and he telled me how his lordship missed the train! What train? And what business had he to be off the train when his wife was on it? That's what I want to know! And any ways it's the rummest go as ever was. Did you hear anything about it, Ishmael?"

"I chanced to overhear Lady Vincent say to her father—that she was alone. That was all. I did not even see her ladyship."

"Well, now, that's another rum go! Didn't wait to see her! And you sich friends? Owtch! Oh! Ah!—What's that for, Hannah? You've trod on my toe and ground it a'most to powder! Ah!"

"If your foot is as soft as your head, no wonder every touch hurts it!" snapped Mrs. Gray.

"Law, what a temper she have got, Ishmael!" said poor Reuben, caressing his afflicted foot.

Hannah had effected the diversion she intended, and soon after gave the signal for rising from the table. And she took good care during the rest of the evening that the subject of Lord and Lady Vincent should not be brought upon the tapis.

The next morning being Monday, Ishmael accompanied Reuben in his rounds over his own little farm, and the great Tanglewood estate, to see the improvements. The "Durrum" cow and calf and the "shank-hye" fowls received due notice. And the first ripe bunches of the "hambur" grapes were plucked in the visitor's honour.

In the afternoon they went down to the oyster-banks, and amused themselves with watching Sam rake the oysters and load the cart.

They returned to a late tea.

It was while they were sitting out on the vine-shaded porch, enjoying their usual evening chat, under the star-lit sky, that they heard the sound of approaching wheels.

And in a few moments afterwards a carriage drew up at the gate.

Reuben walked up to see who was within it. And Ishmael heard the voice of Lord Vincent, inquiring:

"Is this the best road to Tanglewood?"

"Well, yes, sir; I do s'pose it's the best, if any can be called the best where none on 'em is good, but every one on 'em as bad as bad can be!" was the encouraging answer.

"Drive on!" said Lord Vincent. And the carriage rolled out of sight.

After all, then, the viscount had not absconded. He, probably, had missed the train. But why had he missed it? That was still the question.

On Tuesday morning, Ishmael took leave of Hannah and Reuben, promising to stop and spend another day and night with them on his return; and mounted on a fine horse, borrowed from Reuben, with his knapsack behind him, started for Beacon.

It was yet early in the forenoon when he arrived at that cool promontory where the refreshing sea-breezes met him.

As he rode up to the house, that fronted the water, he saw Beatrice, blooming and radiant with youth and beauty, out on the front lawn, with her younger sisters and brothers.

Their restless glances caught sight of him first; and they all exclaimed at once:

"Here's Ishmael, Beatrice; here's Ishmael, Beatrice!" and ran to meet him.

Beatrice impulsively started to run too, but checked herself, and stood, blushing but eager, waiting until Ishmael dismounted and came to greet her.

She met him with a warm silent welcome, and then, looking at him suddenly, said:

"You are so much better: you are quite well! I am so glad, Ishmael!"

"Yes, I am well and happy, dearest Beatrice! thanks to you and to Heaven!" warmly pressing her hands to his lips, before turning to embrace the children, who were jumping around him.

Then they all went into the house, where Mr. and Mrs. Middleton met him with an equally cordial welcome.

"And how did you leave the family at Tanglewood? Family, said I? Ah! there is no family there now; no one but the old judge. How is he? And when are Claudia and my lord expected back?" inquired Mr. Middleton, when they were all seated near one of the sea-view windows.

"The judge is well. Lord and Lady Vincent are with him, replied Ishmael.

And then, in answer to their exclamations of surprise, he told all he knew of the unexpected arrival.

A luncheon of fruit, cream, cake, and wine, was served, and the welcome guest was pressed to partake of it.

Ishmael tasted and enjoyed all except the wine—that, faithful to his vow, he avoided, and was rewarded by a sympathetic look from Beatrice.

This was one of the bright days of Ishmael's life. Nowhere did he feel so much at home, or so happy, as with these kind friends. They had an early sea-side dinner—fish and water-fowl forming a large portion of the bill of fare. Luscious, freshly-gathered fruits composed the dessert. After dinner, as the evening was clear and bright, the wind fresh, and the waters calm, they went for a sail, and returned by star-light.

Ishmael remained all the week at the Beacon and it was a week of rare enjoyment to him. He passed nearly all his time with Beatrice and her inseparable companions, the children. He helped them with the lessons in the schoolroom in the morning; he went nutting with them in the woods, or strolling with them on the beach; and he gave himself up to the task of amusing them during the hour after the lamp was lighted and they were permitted to sit up.

All this was due partly to his desire to be with his betrothed, and partly to his genial love of children.

About the middle of the week, as they were all seated at breakfast one morning, missives came from Tanglewood to the Beacon—invitations to dine there the following Wednesday evening. These invitations included Mr. and Mrs. Middleton, Beatrice and Ishmael.

"You will go, of course, Worth?" said Mr. Middleton.

"I am due at Brudnell Hall on Tuesday evening, and I must keep my appointment," smiled Ishmael.

"Well, I suppose that settles it, for I never knew you to break an appointment, under any sort of temptation," said Mr. Middleton.

And Beatrice, who well understood why, even had Ishmael's time been at his own disposal, he should not have gone to Tanglewood, silently acquiesced.

On this day Ishmael sought an interview with Mr. and Mrs. Middleton, and besought them, as his present income and future prospects equally justified him in taking a wife, to fix some day, not very distant, for his marriage with Beatrice.

But the father and mother assured him, in the firmest though the most affectionate manner, that at least one year, if not two, must elapse before they could consent to part with their dear daughter.

Ishmael most earnestly deprecated the two years of probation, and finally compromised for one year, during which he should be permitted to correspond freely with his betrothed, and visit her at will.

With this Ishmael rested satisfied.

The remainder of the week passed delightfully to him.

Mrs. Middleton took the children off Beatrice's hands for a few days, to leave her to some enjoyment of her lover's visit.

And every morning and afternoon Ishmael and Beatrice rode or walked together through the old forest or along the pebbly beach. Sometimes they had a sail to some fine point on the shore. Their evenings were passed in the drawing-room with Mr. and Mrs. Middleton, and were employed in music, books and conversation.

And so the pleasant days slipped by and brought

the Sabbath, when all the family went together to the old church.

Monday was the last day of his visit, and he passed it almost exclusively in the society of Beatrice. In the evening Mr. and Mrs. Middleton left them alone in the drawing-room, that they might say their last kind words to each other, unembarrassed by the presence of others.

On Tuesday morning Ishmael mounted his horse and started for Brudnell.

CHAPTER LXXVII

ISHMAEL AT BRUDNELL.

God loves no heart to others' iced,
Nor erring flatteries which bedim
Our glorious membership in Christ,
Wherein all loving His, love Him.

M. F. Tupper.

It was a long day's ride from the Beacon to Brudnell Hall. The greater length of the road lay through the forest. It was, in fact, the very same route traversed, five years before, by Reuben Gray, when he brought Hannah and Ishmael from the Hill Cottage to Woodside.

Ishmael thought of that time, as he ambled on through the leafy wilderness.

At noon he stopped at a rural inn, to feed and rest his horse, and refresh himself, and an hour afterwards he mounted and resumed his journey.

It was near sunset when he came in sight of the bay and the village to which it gave the name of Baymouth. How well he remembered the last time he had been at that village—when he had run that frantic race to catch the carriage which was carrying Claudia away from him, and had fallen in a swoon at the sight of the steamer that was bearing her off.

How many changes had taken place since then! Claudia was a viscountess; he was a successful barrister; their love a troubled dream of the past.

He rode through Baymouth, looking left and right, at the old familiar shops and signs that had been the wonder and amusement of his childhood; and at many new shops and signs that the march of progress had brought down even to Baymouth.

He paused a moment to gaze at Hamlin's book shop, that had been the paradise of his boyhood; and he recalled that noteworthy day in August when, while standing before Hamlin's window, staring at the books, he had first been accosted by Mr. Middleton, afterwards assailed by Alfred Burghie, and finally defended by Claudia Merlin. Claudia was noble then—but ah! how ignoble now.

He passed on, unrecognized by any one, first because the years between the ages of seventeen, when he was last there, and twenty-one, when he was now there, really had wrought serious changes in his personal appearance, and secondly, because no one was just then expecting to see Ishmael Worth at all, and least of all in the person of the tall, distinguished-looking, and well-mounted stranger, who came riding through their town, and taking the road to Brudnell.

Every foot of that road was rich in memories to Ishmael. Over it he had ridden, in Mr. Middleton's carriage, on that fateful day of his first meeting with Claudia.

Over it he had travelled, weary and footsore, through the snow, to sell his precious book to buy tea for Hannah.

And over it he had again flashed in Mr. Middleton's gig, happy in the possession of his recovered treasure.

Twilight was deepening into dark when he reached that point in the road where the little footpath diverged from it and led up to the Hill Cottage.

No! he could not pass this by. The path was wide enough to admit the passage of a horse. He turned up it, and rode on until he came in sight of the cottage.

It was but little changed. It is astonishing how long these little lonely dilapidated houses hold on if left alone.

He alighted, tied his horse to a tree, and walked up behind the house, where, under the old elm, he saw the low head-stone gleaming dimly in the starlight.

He knelt and bent over it for a little while. Then he arose and stood with folded arms, gazing thoughtfully down upon it. Finally he murmured to himself, "Not here but risen;" and turned and left the spot.

He went to the tree where he had tied his horse, remounted, and rode on his way.

Again he passed down the narrow path leading back to the broad turnpike road that wound around the brow of the hills to Brudnell Hall.

Here also every yard of the road was redolent of past associations.

At length he came to the cross-roads, and to the turnstile, where he had once seen and been accosted by the beautiful Countess of Hurst-Monceaux.

He rode past this spot, and taking the lower arm of the road, entered upon the Brudnell grounds.

A very short ride brought him to the semicircular avenue leading to the house.

It was now quite dark; but the front of the house was lighted up, holding forth, as it were, its hands in invitation and welcome.

As he rode up and dismounted, a servant came, and took his horse, whilst he walked up the front steps. Mr. Brudnell came out of the front door, and holding out his hand said cordially:

"You are welcome, my dear Ishmael! I received your letter this morning, and I have been looking for you all the afternoon!"

"And I am very glad to get here at last, sir!" said Ishmael, returning the fervent pressure of his father's hands.

"Come up, my boy! Felix! go before us with the light to the room prepared for Mr. Worth," he said to a boy who was waiting in the hall.

Felix immediately led the way up-stairs to a large back room, whose windows overlooked the starlit, dew-spangled garden; and which Ishmael at once recognized as the happy schoolroom of his boyhood; now transformed into his bedroom. He welcomed the old familiar walls with all his heart; he was glad to be in them.

Mr. Brudnell himself took care that Ishmael had everything he was likely to want, and then left him.

When Ishmael had changed his dress, he went below to the drawing-room, where he found his father waiting. The late dinner was immediately served.

Old Jovial, who, on account of his age and infirmity, had been left to vegetate on the estate, waited at the table.

He stole wistful glances at the strange young man who was his master's guest, and who, somehow or other, reminded him of somebody whom he ought to remember, but knew he could not.

At length Ishmael, attracted by his covert regards, looked at him in return, and in spite of his bowed and shrunken form, and thinned and whitened hair, recognized the old friend of his boyhood, and exclaimed, as he offered his hand:

"Why, Jovial, it is never you!"

"Mr. Ishmael, sir, it's never you!" returned the old man, with a grin of joyful recognition.

They shook hands, then and there.

And old Jovial showed his increased regard for the guest by continually proffering bread, vegetables, meat, poultry, pepper, salt, in short everything in succession, over and over again, thereby effectually preventing Ishmael from eating his dinner, by compelling his constant attention to these offerings; until at length Mr. Brudnell interfered and brought him to reason.

The next morning Mr. Brudnell proposed to Ishmael to go out for a day's shooting. And accordingly they took their fowling-pieces, called the dogs, and started for the wooded valley where game most abounded.

They spent the day pleasantly, bagged many birds, and returned home to a late dinner; and the evening closed as before.

"What would you like to do with yourself this morning, Ishmael?" inquired Mr. Brudnell, as they were seated at breakfast on Thursday.

"I wish to go in search of a valued old friend of mine, known in this neighbourhood as the Professor of Odd Jobs," was the reply.

"Oh, Morris! Yes! You will find him, I fancy, in the old place, just on the south edge of the estate," replied Mr. Brudnell.

And when they arose from the table, the latter went out and mounted his horse to ride to the post-office, for Herman Brudnell's establishment was now reduced to so small a number of servants that he was compelled to be his own postman. To be plain with you, there were but two servants—old Jovial, who was gardener, coachman, and waiter; and his wife, who was cook, laundress, and chambermaid.

Felix, the lad mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, was scarcely to be called one, on account of the mental imbecility that confined his usefulness to such simple duties as running little errands from room to room about the house.

CHAPTER LXXVIII

THE PROFESSOR OF ODD JOBS.

An ancient man, hoary grey with old.

Dante.

THE little house, was situated right at the foot of the hill south of Brudnell Hall.

Ishmael approached it from behind and walked around to the front. He opened the little wooden gate of the front yard, and saw seated in the front door, enjoying that early autumn morning, a stalwart old man, whose well-marked features and high forehead were set in a rim of hair and beard as white as snow. A most respectable and venerable-looking form indeed,

though the raiment that clothed it was old and patched. But Ishmael had to look again before he could recognize in this reverend personage the Professor of Odd Jobs.

A curiosity to know whether the professor would recognize him, induced Ishmael to approach him as a stranger. As he came into the yard, however, Morris arose slowly, and lifting his old felt hat, bowed courteously to the supposed stranger.

"Your name is Morris, I believe," said Ishmael, by way of opening a conversation.

But at the first word the professor started and gazed at his visitor, exclaiming:

"Young Ishmael! Oh, my dear boy! how glad I am to see you once more before I die." He burst into tears.

Ishmael went straight into his embrace as the old odd-job man pressed the young gentleman to his honest, affectionate heart.

You knew me at once, professor," said Ishmael, affectionately.

"Knew you, my boy!" burst out the old man, with enthusiasm. "Why I knew you as soon as ever you looked at me and spoke to me. I knew you by your steady smiling eyes and by your rich, sweet voice, young Ishmael. No one has a look and tone like yours."

"You think so because you like me, professor."

"And how you have grown! And they tell me that you have risen to be a great lawyer? I knew it was in you to do it!" said the professor, holding the young man off and gazing at him with all a father's pride.

"By the blessing of Heaven, I have been successful, dear old friend," said Ishmael, affectionately; "but how has it been with you, all these years?" he asked.

"How has it been with me? Ah, young Ishmael! I should say 'Mr. Worth!'"

"Young Ishmael, professor."

"No, no; 'Mr. Worth!' I shall love you none the less by honouring you more! And with me you are henceforth 'Mr. Worth!'"

"As you please, professor. But I hope it has been well with you all these years?"

"Come in, Mr. Worth, and sit down, and I will tell you."

The professor led the way into the humble dwelling. It was as neat as ever, with its sanded floor, cane-bottomed chairs, and fir tables—all of the professor's manufacture—and its bright tin ware and clean crockery ranged in order on its well-scrubbed shelves. But its look of solitude struck a chill upon Ishmael's spirits.

"Where are they all, professor?" he inquired.

"Gone, Mr. Worth," answered Morris, solemnly, as he placed a chair for his guest.

"Gone! not dead?" exclaimed Ishmael, dropping into the offered seat.

"Not all dead, but all gone," answered the professor, sadly, letting himself sink into a seat near Ishmael.

"Your wife?" inquired the young man.

"There—and there," answered the professor, pointing first down and then up; "her body is in the earth; her soul in Heaven, I hope."

"And your daughters, professor?" inquired Ishmael, in a voice of sympathy.

"Both married, Mr. Worth. Ann Maria married Lewis Digges, and they have moved away to better themselves, and they're doing right well, as I hear. He drives a hack and she clear-starches. They have three children, two girls and a boy. I have never seen one of them yet."

"And your other daughter?"

"Mary Ellen? She married Henry Parsons, by trade a blacksmith, and they have one child, a boy. I haven't seen them either since they have been married, for they have left the neighbourhood."

"And you are quite alone?" said Ishmael, in a tender voice.

"Quite alone, young Ishmael," answered the professor, who forgot on this occasion to call the sometime pupil Mr. Worth.

"And how is business, professor?"

"Business has fallen off considerably; indeed I may say it has fallen off altogether."

"I am very sorry to hear it. How is that?"

"Why, you see, Mr. Worth, it's falling off is the natural result of time and progress, of which I cannot explain, and at which I ought to rejoice. It was all very well for the neighbourhood to patronize a Jack-of-all-trades like me, when there was no better to be had; but now you see there are lots of regular mechanics been gradually coming down and settling here—carpenters, and stone-masons, and painters, and glaziers, plumbers and tinners, and saddlers, and shoemakers, and what not? Law, why, you might have seen their signs as you rode through Baymouth."

"I did," said Ishmael.

"Well, you see, these mechanics, they have four—"

men and apprentices with their trades at their fingers' ends, and they can do their work, not only easier and better and quicker than I can, but even cheaper. So I cannot complain that they have taken the custom of the neighbourhood from me."

"Professor, I really do admire the justice and forbearance of your nature."

"Well, young Ishmael, there was another thing! I was getting too old to tramp miles and miles through the country with a heavy pack on my back, as I used to do."

"Well, then, I hope you have saved a little money, at least, old friend, to make you comfortable in your old age," said Ishmael, feelingly.

The poor old odd-job man looked up with a humorous twinkle in his eye as he replied:

"Why, law, Ishmael, the idea of my saving money! When had I the chance to do it in the best o' days? Why, Ishmael, they say how ministers of the gospel and teachers of youth are the worst paid men in the community! but I think, judging by my own case, that professors are quite as poorly remunerated. It used to take everything I could rake and scrape to keep my family together; and so, young Ishmael, I haven't saved a penny!"

"Is that so?" asked Ishmael, in a voice of pain.

"True as gospel, Mr. Worth."

"How, then, do you manage to live, Morris? I ask this from the kindest feelings."

"Don't I know it, Mr. Worth? Well, sir, I do an odd job once and a while yet, and that keeps me from starving," said the professor, with a smile.

Ishmael fell into deep thought for a while and then, lifting his head, said:

"Well, professor, you have been in your day and generation as useful a man to your fellow-creatures as any other in this world. You have contributed as much to the comfort and well-being of the community in which you live as any other member of it! And you should not, and you shall not, be left in your old age, either to suffer from want or to live on charity."

"I may suffer for want, Mr. Worth, but I never will consent to live on charity!" said the odd-job man with dignity.

"That I am sure you never will, professor; though, mind, I do not believe it to be any degradation to live by charity when one cannot live in any other way. For if all men are brethren, should not the able brother help the disabled brother, and that without humbling him?"

"Yes, but I am not disabled, young—Mr. Worth. I am only disused."

"That is very true! And therefore I spoke as I did when I said just now that you should not suffer from want, nor live by charity! Listen to me, professor. I have a proposition to make to you. Your daughters are all married, and your work is done; you are alone and idle here. But you are not a mere animal, to be tied down to one spot of earth by local attachment. You are a very intelligent man, with a progressive mind. You will never stop improving, professor. You have improved very much in the last few years. I notice it in your general conversation."

"I am glad you think so, young—Mr. Worth! but I am getting aged."

"What of that? You are 'travelling towards the light,' and after improving all your life here, you will go on progressing through all eternity."

"Well, sir, that thought ought to be a great comfort to an old man."

"Yes! Now what I want to propose to you is this—I think you love me, professor?"

"Love you, young—Mr. Worth! Why the Lord in heaven bless your dear heart, I love you better than I do anything on the face of the earth, and that's a fact," said the professor with his face all in a glow of feeling.

And all who knew him might have known that he spoke the truth; for though he was not in the least degree deficient in affection for his daughters, yet his love of Ishmael amounted almost to idolatry.

"Dear old friend, I will prove to you, some day, how high a value I set upon your love. I think professor, that loving me, as you do, you could live happily with me?"

"What did you say, young—Mr. Worth? I did not quite understand."

"I will be plain, professor. You have lived out your present life here; it is gone! Now, instead of vegetating in these parts any longer, come into another sphere, a more enlarged and active sphere, where your thoughts as well as your hands will find employment, and your mind as well as your body food."

"How is that to be done, young—Mr. Worth?"

"Come with me. I have a suit of three very pleasant rooms in the house where I board. Now, suppose you come and live with me and take care of my rooms? Your services would be worth a good

liberal salary, from which you would be enabled to live very comfortably and save money."

"What, young Ishmael? Me! I go and live with you all the time, day and night, under one roof! and live where I can get books and newspapers, and hear lectures and debates, and see pictures and models, and in short come at everything I have been longing to reach all my life?"

"Yes, professor, that is what I propose to you."

"There! I used to say that you'd live to be a blessing to my declining years, young—Mr. Worth, (I declare I'll not forget myself again) Mr. Worth! there! Do you really mean it, sir?"

"Really and truly."

"There then, I am not a-going to be a hypocrite, and pretend to higgie-haggle about it! I'll go sir! and be proud to do it; it will be taking a new lease of life for me to go! Do you know, I never was in a large city in all my life, though I have always longed to go! Well, sir, I'll go with you! And I will serve you faithfully, sir; for mine will be a service for love more than for money. And I will never forget the proprieties so far as to call you anything else but 'Mr. Worth,' or 'sir' in the presence of others, sir, though my heart does betray me into calling you young Ishmael sometimes here."

"I shall leave this on Saturday morning. Can you be ready to go with me as soon as that?"

"Of course I can, Mr. Worth. There's nothing for me to do in the way of preparation, but to pack my knapsack and lock my door," answered this "rough and ready."

"Very well, then, professor, I like your promptitude. Meet me at Brudnell Hall on Saturday morning at seven o'clock, and in the meantime I will find a conveyance for you."

"All right; thank you, sir; I will be ready."

And Ishmael shook hands with the professor, and departed, leaving him hopeful and happy.

At the dinner-table that day, being questioned by his father, Ishmael told him of the retainer he had engaged.

"Ah, my dear boy! it is just like you to burden yourself with the presence and support of the poor old man, and persuade him,—and yourself, too, perhaps,—that you are securing the services of an invaluable assistant. And all with no other motive than his welfare," said Mr. Brudnell.

"Indeed, sir, I think it will add to my own happiness to have Morris with me. I like and esteem the old man; and I believe that he really will be of much use to me," replied his son.

"Well, I hope so, Ishmael! I hope so."

There was through all his talk a preoccupied air about Mr. Brudnell that troubled his son, who at last said:

"I hope, sir, that you have received no unpleasant news by this mail?"

"Oh, no! no, Ishmael! but I have had on my mind for several days something of which I wish to speak to you."

"Yes, sir?"

"Ishmael, since I have been down here, I have followed your counsel. I have gone about among my tenants and dependants, and—without making inquiries—I have led them to speak of the long period of my absence from my little kingdom, and of the manner in which Lady Hurst-Monceaux administered its affairs. And, Ishmael, I have heard but one account of her. With one voice the community here accord her the highest praise."

"I told you so, sir."

"As a wife, though an abandoned one, as a mistress of the house, and as lady of the manor, she seems to have performed all her duties in the most unexceptionable manner."

"Every one knows that, sir."

"But still remains the charge not yet refuted!"

"Because you have given her no chance to refute it, sir. Be just! Put her on her defence, and my word for it, she will exonerate herself," said Ishmael, earnestly.

Mr. Brudnell shook his head.

"There are some things, Ishmael, that on the very face of them admit of no defence!" said Mr. Brudnell, with an emphasis that put an end to the conversation.

Punctually at seven o'clock, Saturday, the professor, accoutred for a journey, with knapsack on his back, presented himself at the servants' door at Brudnell Hall.

His arrival being announced, Ishmael came out to meet him.

"Well, here I am, Mr. Worth; though how I am to travel I don't know. I have walked already so far!" he said.

"All right, professor. Mr. Brudnell will lend me an extra horse."

And father and son took leave of each other with earnest wishes for their mutual good.

(To be continued.)

MATRIMONY AND FRIENDSHIP.—Sam Slick, in his "Wise Saws," says that the nature of matrimony is one thing, and the nature of friendship is another. A tall man likes a short wife; a great talker a silent woman, for both can't talk at once. A gay man likes a domestic woman, for he can leave her at once to nurse children and get dinner while he is enjoying himself at parties. A man that hasn't any music in him likes it in his spouse, and so on. It chimes beautifully, for they ain't in each other's way. Now, friendship is the other way: you must like the same in each other and be good friends. A similarity of taste, studies, pursuits and recreations (what we call congenial souls)—a toper for a toper, a smoker for a smoker, a horse-racer for a horse-racer, a prize-fighter for a prize-fighter, and so on. Matrimony likes contrasts; friendship seeks its own counter-part; but the contrasts should not be contraries.

HOW DO FISH LIVE AND GROW?

By naturalists the mysterious whitebait is classed in the herring family (*Clupeidae*); but there are few of the thousands who annually partake of this piscine delicacy that have time or curiosity enough to bestow a thought on the natural history of what they are eating.

They know all about brown bread, that it is a preparation of wheaten flour, with a portion of the husk left in it; they know that butter is made from milk, and that milk is obtained from cows; and in all probability they know something about the vintage, and the making of chablis; but of the whitebait, except that it is a Thames fish, they know nothing; and, indeed, neither do our naturalists. If we consult Yarrell, and Yarrell is par excellence the authority on fishes of all kinds, in addition to a description of the whitebait, we have an account of how it is taken, and a résumé of a former endeavour to prove that whitebait is a distinct fish, and that is all.

Whitebait was at one time thought to be the young of the shad, which fish again was supposed to be the monarch of the herring tribe. The Twaite shad is interesting, in so far that, like the salmon, it deposits its spawn in the fresh water; for that purpose it enters streams communicating with the sea about May, and leaves them in July. The Alice shad grows to a large size, specimens having been taken which measured twenty-four inches in length.

These fish were supposed to lead the great army of herring in their annual migration from the Polar regions to the British seas; and, in addition to this act of large-hearted kindness, they went up the rivers, and, while waiting to conduct the herring home again, they deposited their own spawn—on purpose, we fancy, that the British Ministry might dine in harmony at least once a year! It is the Alice shad that is reputed to be the parent of the whitebait.

But whitebait, like sprats, are a mystery; and it is questioned by some Thames fishermen if they have any parentage to boast of. Dr. Fleming roundly asserts that whitebait is the fry of the Alice shad. Had we in London what the French have in Paris, a marine aquarium, we could soon solve the question by keeping these fish constantly under our eye, and noting their progress from day to day. There is nothing impossible in what we suggest. — *Fraser's Magazine*.

The Lord Chancellor has now more than 300 church livings for sale under the new act to increase the incomes of benefices. It appears they are situated in 24 dioceses, of which 11 are in the diocese of Canterbury, 4 London, 25 York, 24 Exeter, 27 Lincoln, 22 Worcester, 13 Chichester, 10 Gloucester, 15 Oxford, 22 Norwich, 11 Sarum, 13 Hereford, 12 Rochester, 4 Carlisle, 11 Lichfield, 15 Ely, 13 Winchester, 17 St. David's, 9 Bath and Wells, 2 Manchester, 19 Peterborough, 9 Ripon, 1 Llandaff, and 3 Durham.

CULTIVATION OF THE CAMPHOR-TREE.—It is something more than a wonder that a tree, in itself so valuable, in production a necessity so absolute, and so entirely susceptible of successful cultivation, should so long be totally neglected by our agriculturists. As the camphor-tree is quite as hardy as any of our apple-trees, there is, perhaps, no good reason why it should not succeed well wherever the apple-tree will grow. It is indigenous to all parts of China, Japan, Formosa, Burmah, and Chinese Tartary, and flourishes as far north as the Amoor country; but it is found in the greatest abundance along the eastern coast of China, between Amoy and Shanghai. In the districts of Kwang-tung and Fu-chien it grows in dense forests, the trunk attaining a size equalling that of any of our forest-trees. The principal market for camphor lumber is Amoy, where some boards are 30 inches in width. The camphor gum of commerce does not in any case exude from the tree, as has been so generally supposed: but it is obtained from the leaves, twigs, and smaller roots by distillation.



[CHRISTIAN IX., KING OF DENMARK.]

PRINCE CHRISTIAN, NOW KING OF DENMARK.

CHRISTIAN IX. who, by an event equally sudden and unexpected, has just ascended the Danish throne, belongs to the House of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Glücksburg, and was born on the 8th of April, 1818. Before his accession to the Crown, he was Inspector-General and Commander-in-Chief of the Danish Cavalry; and, in 1842, was married to a daughter of the Landgrave William of Hesse, by whom he has had several children, and among whom is the Princess Alexandra, united to the Heir-apparent of the British throne.

It would appear that through the sudden death of the late King, the condition of the vexed question respecting Schleswig-Holstein has been completely changed. All the negotiations previously entered upon, whether respecting Federal execution or not, are absolutely placed in the background in comparison with the questions now remaining for decision. Since the year 1460 the present moment is the greatest turning-point in the history of the Duchies of Schleswig-Holstein. It must now be decided whether the country on the North Elbe shall for ever remain united to Denmark, and whether the frontier of Germany shall for the future be the Elbe.

The situation of affairs is known. Schleswig-Holstein stands to Denmark in a similar relation to that in which Hanover stood to England under King William IV. Both countries were allied in a transitory manner through the person of the Regent, but the succession was different. In Denmark the agnate and cognate heirs of Frederick III. are entitled to succeed, but in Schleswig-Holstein only the agnate heirs of Christian I. The connection between both countries must cease as soon as the male line of Frederick III. ceases. The king just deceased, Frederick VII., was the last member of the male line of Frederick III. If the legitimate right of succession were now to come into operation, the House of Augustenburg would suc-

ceed in Schleswig-Holstein, and the Landgravine Charlotte of Hesse, the paternal aunt of the deceased King in Denmark. Thereby the connection with Denmark might be completely dissolved, and from the death of the late King, the Schleswig-Holsteiners might date the commencement of a new era.

The situation of affairs would stand thus if the London Convention of May 8, 1852, did not exist. By this convention, European diplomacy lately sanctioned the prejudice prevailing as to the necessity of the integrity of the Danish monarchy, and the legitimate order of succession was sacrificed to this prejudice. Unfortunately, Prussia and Austria have also in this case, where the bases of legitimacy stood in opposition to the interests of Germany, participated in this attack upon legitimacy. After the unfortunate issue of the Danish war, and under the impression caused by it, the London Convention was resolved upon, by which Prince Christian of Glücksburg, the so-called protocol prince, was designated as successor in Denmark and in the Duchies after the extinction of the male line of Frederick III. The convention was signed by England, France, Russia, Prussia, Austria, Sweden, and Denmark. The signatories bound themselves to recognize the succession of Prince Christian of Glücksburg, but they did not undertake a guarantee for the fulfilment of the convention.

These are the terms of the document. But a valid change of the order of succession is not brought about by it. The act wants the adhesion of the agnates entitled to succeed and also the sanction of the Estate of Schleswig-Holstein, and finally the sanction of the German Bund. Prussia and Austria only signed the London convention as European Powers. Germany is not bound by it so long as the Bund has not recognized the change of succession.

Respecting the future of the Duchies, a decision must now be arrived at. The tedious negotiations by which the question has been dragged hither and thither during the last few years must be entirely forgotten, and the question must be again taken up in

its purity. All depends upon the point that the previous dynastic connection of the Duchies with Denmark ceases. It is expected that the German Bund will never recognise the present King of Denmark as Duke of Schleswig-Holstein; further, that it will never admit to its sittings a representative of the King of Denmark, but will invite the Duke of Holstein to nominate a commissioner to the Diet. Finally, the Hereditary Prince of Augustenburg, if he is equal to the task which has now devolved upon him, ought not to content himself with a protest against the succession of the protocol prince to the throne, but ought to take those steps which are necessary to maintain the right of succession to which he is actually entitled.

Meanwhile, as an earnest of his intention to do this, he has issued a proclamation to the Schleswig-Holsteiners, in which he says: "Our common task is to put an end to this rule (the King of Denmark's). I cannot now appeal to you to meet force with force. Your country is occupied with foreign troops. You have no arms. On this account the duty is, before all, imposed on me to urge the Federal Governments to take steps for the protection of my governmental right and your national rights. The German Federation was never opposed to my legitimate succession. The arrangement on which the Governments of Germany rest is the same on which my rights are founded, and the Governments of Europe will not oppose the truths confirmed by experience, that a durable situation cannot continue where an arbitrary governmental regulation rules. I will stand by you, as I have stood by you in battle, and will not separate myself from you and our rights; and so I vow and swear, according to the fundamental laws of the State, to observe the constitution and the laws of the Duchies of Schleswig-Holstein, and to maintain intact the rights of the people. So may God's help and His Holy Word preserve me.—FREDERIC, Duke of Schleswig-Holstein."

Several of the Prussian journals breathe a spirit strongly inclined to favour the cause of this prince; but what will be the real attitude of the Prussian Government itself is not at present known. There can be no doubt but that a crusade against Schleswig and Holstein would be very popular amongst the German people; but neither they nor the Federal Diet will effect much, without the concurrence of Austria and Prussia. An attempt to support by arms the pretensions of Prince Frederic as Duke of Schleswig-Holstein, by the German Diet, would be equivalent to a war for the Danish succession, to the scope and duration of which no limits at its outset could be placed. The famous war for the Swedish succession endured sixty years and the combatants contrived to embroil nearly the whole of Europe in their cause.

In the meantime, it appears that the extreme section of the Holstein Diet have resolved to assemble at Kiel in spite of the prohibition of the Danish Government, with the object of soliciting the assistance of Federal Germany against the rule of Christian IX., according to the settlement of 1852. The Danish Government will probably know how to deal with such an act. But there is no doubt that, whether this meeting be held or not, it will be used as a handle by the allies of the Prince of Augustenburg, with whom this section of the Holstein Diet are probably in collusion. If, however, Denmark is capable of holding her own, the Western Powers will probably step in to protect her from an infraction of the Treaty of 1852. However this may be, it is asserted that the Grand Duke of Weimar and the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen have recognized the hereditary Prince of Augustenburg as Duke of Schleswig-Holstein, whilst by permission of his Government, the delegate of Baden to the Federal Diet has accepted the office of a representative of Duke Frederic of Schleswig-Holstein in that assembly in right of his vote for the Holstein territory.

HER MAJESTY is so much interested in the progress of the Royal Mausoleum that she visits the works once or twice a day.

19,199 applications for admission into the Royal Naval Reserve had been received up to the 31st of October, and 16,647 volunteers enrolled in the force.

HER MAJESTY has sent three guineas to Martha Reed, an Aberdeen girl, aged thirteen, in return for some verses on "Albert the Good."

It is not expected that the Queen's private band will be required to play at the Castle before the commencement of the new year; even the Castle guard continues to be relieved without music.

SOME young chess-players have a notion that it is useless to play against scientific and studied players, as they must be cognizant of every move. It has been calculated that the chessmen on the board are susceptible of 264,517,206,000 combinations. If one could make a new combination every second, it would take one and a half times as long as the world has existed since the creation to exhaust the combinations.



[FLORA'S SECRET LOVE.]

MAN AND HIS IDOL.

CHAPTER LXIX.
SECRET LOVE.

Of this consuming passion not a word!
Raymond.

By a great effort Flora Angerstein dragged the insensible body of Mark Allardyce into her dressing-room. It was a trial for her strength, but she accomplished it, and then, closing and locking the door, she knelt down in a whirl of floating skirts and looked at him.

The light of the wax-tapers, in brackets on either side of her toilet-glass, was dim, but it showed the white, upturned face of the man clearly enough for her, quite distinctly enough for those large black, cat-like eyes of hers to distinguish every feature. And the contemplation of the man's face seemed to afford her the utmost satisfaction.

She made no effort to revive him.

The dressing-table was crowded with an ostentatious display of scent bottles, smelling salts, aromatic vinegar *flacons*, and so forth, to which any other woman would have had recourse in such a moment.

Flora did not look toward them.

Crouching there upon the ground in the amplitude of the rose-coloured drapery, she was content to watch this bad, blood-tainted man, not with expectancy, but with an expression of intense enjoyment.

It was singular; but she was a singular woman. Her very weaknesses were hardly those of her sex, or, if they were, she showed them after an original fashion of her own. So in this case, though the rumour of a possible marriage between her and Mark was circulated in the village, no one who knew them would have suspected either of them of loving the other. Mark clearly cared nothing for Flora. But Flora? Well, if you had hinted that there lurked in any corner of her heart the faintest shadow of a love for Mark, she would have laughed outright in your face.

"Love him?" she would have cried, "Ha! ha! The joke is too good. I love him so little that, for a trifling inducement, I could marry him!"

It was her bitter, jesting way thus to speak of love and marriage as utterly incompatible.

Even to Mark himself she would not for the world have avowed that he was anything but indifferent to her. She would have undergone any torture first. In her eyes it gave a man an undue influence over a woman, made him at once master, if not tyrant over

her, only to admit the possibility of such a weakness as affection.

Yet in her heart of hearts she nourished a feeling which had all the depth and intensity of the purest love.

At first she had been indifferent to Mark, she had regarded him merely as useful. As she saw him yielding more and more to her serpent-like fascinations, it was only her vanity which was gratified. But when Mark, startled into something like dislike by the persistency with which she hinted at his guilt, shrank from and avoided her, she was not, as might have been supposed, stung to hatred. It was not revenge which filled her heart, it was another, an opposite passion, and, in the dark solitude of her wicked nature, she had been driven to acknowledge a debasing fact.

"Heaven help me!" she had cried to herself—and it was to herself alone; "I love this man!"

So now, in the solitude of the dressing-room from which she had been about to issue, radiant in all the arts of the toilet, she knelt down by his side, snatching a stolen pleasure—looking into his face with the singular satisfaction that he did not know it, and could neither laugh at her or repulse her.

"It is my doom," she muttered to herself; "it is my doom to love this man. I loathe, I despise myself, as I ought to loathe and despise him; but I love him! And this wretch, this miserable, criminal wretch, resists and despises me!"

She started up.

There was a fierce light in her eyes, a terrible compression that made deep lines about her mouth, and her hands were tightly and fervently clasped.

It was a moment of terrible self-sacrifice.

With all the intensity of her strong nature, she strove to feel as she ought to feel, to resist a fascination which she felt was dangerous and degrading, to tear herself away from an object in which she already recognized some fatality.

Slowly, very slowly, she dragged herself from the body of the prostrate man to the opposite side of the room, and sank quivering, trembling, over-borne by emotion, upon the chair before her dressing-table.

"If I could leave him now—now!" she gasped.

It seemed as if to rid herself of his bodily presence would be to break the spell that was upon her—the spell of her own morbid feelings. But this was difficult. Behind her was the window draped with lace. Before her was the locked door, across the path lay the object she of all things longed to fly from.

Need the end be told?

Need it be said how the weaker instincts of prudence

and self-respect melted away in the hot flame of passion, and how, in that hour, Flora realised her own idea that this man was her doom?

She returned to his side, she sank again upon the floor, kneeling there with clasped hands, and, looking at his white face, feasted her eyes in the luxury of secret love.

"He will never know it," she said, as she bent over and pressed her lips to his cold brow, "I will die before he shall know or suspect it."

It might have been half-an-hour before Mark Allardyce opened his eyes. When he did so, they encountered her large orbs blazing with an unnatural fire.

"Flora!" he murmured.

She answered him in a voice from which every trace of emotion had passed away, rose from her knees, and hastily drew back.

"What am I doing here?" he demanded.

"Hush! you will fatigue yourself," she answered, "you've had a fainting fit. I'll tell you about it by-and-by."

"But how—how came I into your room?"

"You fell at the door, and it was open, and—and I closed it. That's all."

A ready lie.

She was apt at these things, and if she would lie for other purposes, should she not do so now? To have told what she had done would have been to hint at her secret; and had she not said she would die before he should suspect that?

For a few moments, Mark lay perfectly calm and placid. The past seemed lost in hazy distance: he could not tell what had led to his being there, and in that state. Slowly, however, the mist was rolling off. He recalled the interview with Lotty; then the brutal insult of Nathan Lee; and lastly, the apparition at the cottage window!

That was the clue to all.

With a spasm of the face, and a short, sharp cry, he raised himself upon one elbow.

"You were by, you alone?" he demanded, "no one but you heard what I said?"

"No one," she replied.

"I might have raved, I might have said more than I really meant—something that I did not mean, that was not true. In a moment of frenzy a man's lips betray him."

"You said nothing, Mark?" answered Flora, "nothing but what I already knew. It was I who spoke to you of Meredith, of his friend Hildred, of the woman Lotty. Have you forgotten?"

He had, but the mention of those names was like an electric spark: instantly the whole truth flashed upon

his mind, and the horror of the past hour revived, but rather as a recollection than a reality.

"I was a weak fool," he said, rising and seating himself upon a luxurious couch in the apartment. "I've allowed myself to be terrified by phantoms. I've seen danger where there was none. The bravest man is a fool sometimes. I've been one to-night."

It was in Flora's heart to advance to him, to throw her arms about his neck, and to give him the assurance of her specious lips that while she lived no danger should come near him; but she did not. She refrained even from an expression of sympathy. Overcome as she was, slave as she felt herself at heart, she would not descend so low as to own the fascination of a man whom she at once loved and despised.

Do not think that those feelings are opposed to each other.

Many a woman has given her heart in spite of her judgment, and lavished affection on the object which she knew—must have known—to be utterly unworthy of it.

The silence which ensued after Mark had seated himself was broken by Flora.

"The dinner-bell has rung," she said, "had you not better go and dress?"

"Dress?" cried Mark. "Not I."

"You won't dine to-day? You're not well? Shall I make your apologies?" said Flora.

"No," was the rejoinder; "you needn't trouble. They don't want me, and won't wait for me. God knows if ever I shall dine with them again!"

He paused for a moment, thinking. Then he went on:

"Flora," he said, "I've sometimes thought there was something in common between you and me. There's a devil about you, that I'm not altogether quit of, there's a contempt for principles and morals, and consequences and all the rest of it—there you needn't fly off, I shan't eat you!"

She had risen, as if to leave, cold and calm in aspect, but with a fierce throbbing of her Creole heart.

"I thank you, I'm sure!" she retorted, with a bitter smile. "I'm not afraid. You're not such a terrible hero to me, Mr. Mark. I've met with fire-eaters, and dragon-killers before, and they've all been particularly harmless."

"Come, come!" said Mark. "I mean't no harm, and I'm in no mood for jesting. I'm a poor, unlucky beggar, Flora, and you might give me a moment or so of your time, though the dinner-bell has rung."

She stooped down, played with the diamond pendants of her bracelets, listened with flaming cheeks, but said nothing.

"You understand enough of me and my affairs," Mark went on, "to see that I'm a bit troubled and worried. 'Twasn't what you told me about Meredith, altogether. I'm not afraid of anything that beggar can do, but other things have come about that worry me, and make me want a confidant, and the sympathy of somebody I can confide in."

"I understand. Such a person as your mother, the countess, for instance," replied Flora, with a sneer.

"Curse the countess!" said this charming son, flying into a rage in an instant. "What do you want to make a fool of a fellow like that for, Flora? It's too bad. I'm talking sober common sense to you, and you're giggling and making fun of me."

Flora looked up with a grave face, but he saw that it was ready to burst into dimples, and that the corners of the mouth were ready to draw up into laughter.

"What do you want, Mark?" she said.

"This, Flora," he said. "I've been surrounded with difficulties all my life; but now I'm for the first time exposed to dangers. The fact is, I've trusted your sex and have been deceived, and like a fool I can't help wanting to trust again, I praps with the same result."

"You compliment," cried Flora, sneeringly.

"No I don't: I speak the sober, earnest truth. As I've said, there's much in common between us two; and now that I'm in danger and want a friend, I fly to you, somehow, as naturally as a bird to the nest when the storm comes. The fact is, Flora, other people have made the same mistake that you've made. They've charged me with the crime that the popular voice justly assigns to the old earl. Meredith's got that notion, the man Hildred's inoculated with it, and worst of all, that woman, Lotty, is spreading the rumour like wildfire. There are others joining in the cry; and between them I see no escape, unless you, with your long head and quick brain, can point out the way to me. Now, will you do this?"

"It is asking a good deal," replied Flora.

"Yes; but it's an obligation I shall never forget, and one that I will repay in any form you may choose to dictate."

"You remember that we have spoken of this before?"

"Yes."

"And I have hinted to you that there were ways and means not only of saving yourself, but of turning the whole affair to our mutual advantage. You recollect this?"

"Can I have forgotten it?" he answered. "I have only recoiled from your proposal for one reason. It was because you also affected to believe me guilty!"

"Affected!" cried Flora; "I did—I do believe it!"

"What! you tell me this to my face?"

"Why not? You ask my aid—you seek to make me an accomplice in whatever you may do. Those acts cannot be simple or innocent. Why should I be squeamish or nice in my words to you? I do believe that you, and not the earl, put an end to that old man, and I tell you more—I believe I should have done the same had I been in your place!"

Mark was astounded. Even he recoiled at this horrible avowal from those bright lips, dyed as he could half-fancy they were in congenial blood. But though startled, he was not thrown off his guard. He resolved to confess nothing.

"Whatever you might have done," he said, "is beside the point. The past is past; it is the present we have to look to. My safety is imperilled; now, will you aid me in securing my safety?"

"No," answered Flora, promptly.

"No? And for what reason?"

"Because you don't need my aid. Your safety is secured to you in your own innocence!"

The emphasis she threw on those words was torturing.

Well enough he understood that, unless he placed his life in this strange woman's hands, he must hope for no sympathy or aid from her. As a last resource, however, he determined to try one other expedient. So, with a cunning which was no match for her penetration, he remarked:

"It was not only my own safety, it was our mutual advantage of which we once spoke. Need I tell you, in so many words, that I am a single man, and that the earl's liberality might enable me to offer you —"

"What I should refuse."

"Indeed! I was about to say —"

"That circumstances might arise which would justify you in doing me the honour of offering me your hand. I understand; but let me say for once that no circumstances could arise which would induce me to accept it. I will tell you why. It is simply because you do not love me enough to trust me!"

Flora rose as if about to go.

The man, starting forward, laid his hand upon her round, plump arm.

"You shall know all," he said.

"And then we will decide."

"Good! but, in the meantime, Hildred —"

"Shall not communicate with the girl Lotty! That I promise you."

Mark was not satisfied, but what could he do? In the dangers which surrounded him he could not act alone; his friend Lord Sandown was too much occupied in parting his hair and shaping his almond nails to be of essential service; and this woman alone remained to him.

"I must have her on my side at any cost," was his reflection.

And she, as her little feet, in the sweetest of satin boots, bore her down to dinner, and her rose-coloured dress floated about her, had her reflection.

"I will never own that I love him," she thought; "but I will save him, and marry him if I can screw enough out of the earl to set us up in life in the right style. We should get on famously."

She was met by some one of the many visitors in the house, and was led into the dining-room radiant with smiles.

CHAPTER LXX.

DUTY OVER.

And sweet is all the land about and all the flowers that blow
And sweeter far is death than life to me that long to go.
Tennyson.

ONCE more, though only for one brief hour, it is necessary that we cross the channel, and take up that thread of the tangled skein of this history which first took us to Paris.

It is a dark, bleak night. Rain has fallen all day, the clouds are full of it, and in this sullen, depressing November midnight, it has begun to drizzle once more.

Two men, closely muffled up, and a woman much more thinly clad, are plodding along, through the black mud, up a narrow, deserted street.

In all that street, at that hour, there is but one house in which any signs of life are visible. Through the thin texture of a curtain once red, but now bleached by many years' exposure to the sun, the rays of a lamp are feebly discernible. But the light is not strong enough to illuminate the dark street below; and when the three stop and talk beneath this window it is by

accident, by the mere accident of one wishing to retrace his steps and waiting to speak the parting word.

"She was carried off, that's a sure thing," says the woman, putting her arms a-kimbo as she speaks; "I heard it from twenty people after the fire."

"But who could have done it? Who'd have cared enough about her except one of her own set?" urged one of the men.

"I don't know, I'm sure. I know none of your furineering ways," retorted the woman; "leastways, not enough to answer for what might become of her!"

"Well," said the man who had not yet spoken, and whose voice was that of Master Paul, of the Silver Horn, "all I know is that the strictest search has been made from one end of Paris to another, and not a trace of the girl has been obtained. She couldn't have died; we should have heard of that, or seen her body at the Morgue, where the unknown dead are exposed for identification. It's clear, too, that she couldn't have been carried far from this spot by the man who saved her. My impression is that she's met with friends, who've heard her story and sent her back somehow."

"The worst of it is," said the woman, "that she may turn up just when she isn't wanted, and by then she'll be at the bottom of the sea. But whether to leave 'em to find out that she isn't dead, or to leave it to chance that she is, or what, I really don't know how to advise."

"Angerstein knows nothing?" asked the first speaker.

"Nothing."

"Well, we shall get his tin all right, anyhow, if we keep the secret. If he finds it out afterwards, well, he can whistle for his money back."

"Very good," said Master Paul.

"Then I'll get back home to my old man, and not worry no more about her," said the woman.

"That's best," replied Paul.

Then, with a mutual "good-night," the woman and the man proceeded down the street, while Master Paul returned the way he had come.

Neither of the parties to this interview had noticed that while it took place, the curtain of the window above their heads, through which the light shone, had been suddenly lifted, then as suddenly dropped, but that to the end the giant shadow of a man's head was discernible upon it.

As they separated that shadow disappeared.

The window was in fact, that of the great, gloomy chamber which Kingstons Meredith had paced so wearily during the long days and nights in which he had waited for death, whose coming was even yet delayed.

And he had himself overheard the conversation which had passed under the window. It had been by the mere accident of a pane of glass, serving as a ventilator, being open that he had been able to do so, and the few words he had first caught had, he felt, justified him in listening to the rest.

"So!" he muttered, as the footsteps died away, "the persecution is still kept up. St. Omer stops at nothing to secure his safety. The father dead, the child hunted into a premature grave—in Heaven's name, what next? Those noble houses may well rear their heads proudly, seeing how human life is lavished to give security to their foundations. And so the Angersteins are lending themselves to the earl's plots, are they? That accounts for their long stay at Redruth, which has puzzled the infatuated Frank. Well, well, we shall see. They wish Emmy Kingstons dead. They shall have their wish, and they may find that Heaven doesn't always grant us blessings, even when it gives us all we ask."

As he listened to what passed in the street below, there had been a strong prompting in the young man's breast to rush out and secure one or more of the accomplices in the wicked conspiracy; but a little reflection showed him the folly of that. Already he had possessed himself from Emmy of the means of hunting them down if necessary, and that was enough.

More than enough he felt.

The evil had been wrought, the victim had been marked down and hunted to the death; within a few hours all must be over.

Agitated by the conversation he had overheard, Meredith did not immediately betake himself to the sick chamber. When he did, he was surprised to note the change which a few hours had wrought in the patient.

She looked thinner and more wasted, but the rosy hue upon her cheek mocked that of health so completely that it would have deceived all but those in the secret. And then the eyes! They were positively luminous and blazing with intelligence.

The doctor stood by the bedside, with his large gold watch in one hand, the other holding the wasted wrist of the dying girl.

"She is angelic to-night!" cried Meredith.

"Yes," was all that the doctor vouchsafed by way of reply.

"I am better, Kingston," said Emmy herself, though she had not been able to speak for several days.

"Better! Heaven be praised for that!" ejaculated the young man.

"Oh, yes. If I can only get strong, I might, after a long, very, very long time, leave my bed and walk with you a little, Kingston, in the fields—the beautiful green fields—where the daisies are. If —"

A tearing paroxysm of coughing came in the midst of the sentence, and when it was over the girl lay crimson with the exertion and gasping for breath.

Kingston drew the doctor aside.

"Is she better?" he asked.

"No; worse, much worse," was the answer. "Her living is a miracle!"

"And her state is hopeless?"

"Quite."

For at least half-an-hour the young man and the doctor sat by the bedside in silence, while the female attendant moved about the room apparently attending to the necessities of the sick girl—in reality preparing such articles as she knew would be required in the change slowly coming over her, and for which the woman's instinct warned her to provide.

Presently the child raised her hand.

Meredith approached her head and bent over.

"We shall never walk in the fields together any more," she said.

"Don't say it, Emmy—don't say it, my darling!" he cried, deeply affected.

"Never again," she said, so mournfully that the words went to his heart. "I am dying, Kingston. I did not think so, but I feel it now, and before I go away for ever and ever, I must say one word to you. Oh, pardon me, forgive me, Kingston, I have been very, very wicked."

"Wicked!"

He was astounded at her words.

"Yes, wicked and selfish; but you will try and forgive me. Oh, Kingston, I couldn't die and not confess it to you! I have seen what you have suffered all these days and nights, and how your heart was with her away in dear England that I shall never see again, and I knew that my wish alone kept you back, and yet I wouldn't unsay it. I tried to—I did indeed. I knew it was so wrong and so cruel, and my heart reproached me every minute, and yet I couldn't unsay my word and bid you 'go.' Oh, Kingston, don't hate me, don't despise me; forgive me—pray, pray forgive me!"

She clasped those weak, attenuated, waxen hands together over her bosom, and looked toward him with streaming eyes.

"I do forgive you from my heart," he said; "I forgive and pity you!"

He bent slowly down and pressed a kiss on her white brow, round which the tendrils curled clustered in a golden heap, as in the olden time, with no shadow of death upon them.

Then the tears ceased to flow, and a soft, angelic smile stole over the pinched and wasted face, and the hands that were clasped in supplication parted, and one found its way into Meredith's right palm and nestled there—not long, but to the last.

Again there was silence, broken only by the hard breathing and the busy attendant's rustling garments. Suddenly the dying girl motioned to Meredith, and when he bent over her face, she whispered:

"Kingston!"

"I listen," he said.

"Ah, if I had but my Bible!" she gasped. "You will find it?—You will keep it for my sake?"

"Yes, Emmy, yes."

"So I promised, and I broke my word, and my father's reproaching eyes haunt me to this hour. But you—you will not forget it?"

"I will not."

"God bless you—Kingston!"

No more.

The hand resting in Meredith's stiffened and grew cold. The eyes that looked so tenderly up into his handsome face filmed over—the troubled breathing ceased.

Emmy Kingston was no more.

And the young man who had so innocently, so unconsciously won the virgin love of her pure heart went out into the great gloomy chamber and wept for her as for a sister.

Gray dawn stole in through the faded curtains before he started up with a sudden energy, and clasping his hands, exclaimed:

"Thank God I never left her till the last. So far I have been true to the promise I gave her dying father, and now, without a moment's loss of time, to England!"

There was a mournful chord even in the exulting cry with which he uttered these words.

CHAPTER LXXI.

VISITORS AT ENDLE'S RENTS.

Her voice is sweeter than the fountain's fall;
Music more exquisite than madrigal. *Crashaw.*

THE November weather, so gloomy even in Paris, was at its worst in London two nights after the incident just recorded.

There was so much fog, and that of so dense a nature that the streets seemed mere spectral illusions, peopled by phantoms who melted away as they walked into cabs, into shops, or even into the air itself.

Friends parting in the streets saw ghosts of one another, dying away behind the red tips of the cigars they had mutually lighted, and which a few yards of space utterly swallowed up.

And if the weather was bad elsewhere, you may be sure it was not much in Endle's Rents, St. Martin's Lane. Endle's Rents held fog as a bottle holds water. The narrow, twisting, corkscrew-like place, seemed to it what the copper vessel was to the genius who terrified the fisherman so terribly when he issued from his prison. The only difference was that the fog never could be said fairly to leave Endle's Rents from the beginning of winter to the end of it.

Yet people therewith jogged on, and did their business and enjoyed themselves like other folks.

"And if," as a distinguished inhabitant whom we have met before, Mrs. Mary Ann Stott, of the post-office and general shop, sometimes remarked—"and if, as I says, there's fog outside, there's no reason why there should be grumblin', and groanin', and a flyin' in the face of Providence inside. Which many's the time, I've said to Traddles; he was my first, and more's the pity. 'Traddles, I've said, when he've been a goin' on again the weather as if I could help it; 'It's a poor heart as never rejoices,' I've said, 'and there's them as tempests the shorn lamb to the wind.'"

This cheerful philosophy the good lady had indulged in more and more of late; and, if the truth must be told, there was a reason for it. Mrs. Stott was a widow—Mrs. Stott had buried two husbands, but as she often asserted, "While there's life there's hope;" and it so happened that there was both life in Mrs. Stott and the hope that she might, for the third time, enter the holy estate of matrimony.

It will not have escaped the reader's memory, though the date of the incident is remote, that on a certain memorable occasion, a police officer, A 13 by number, presented himself in the apartment occupied by Daniel Kingston and his daughter Emmy.

The manner of Mrs. Stott in addressing that officer was, to say the least of it, familiar.

One less agitated than the persons then present would have gathered clearly enough that she had seen him before; and, in fact, she had done so very often. But what of that?

Endle's Rents was often in A 13's beat. The door of the little post-office was always open. The buxom widow often filled up the door-way with her comely figure, and surely it was only commonly civil that the post-mistress and the policeman (both acting under Government, you see) should exchange a word of morning and evening greeting.

After a time they fell into the habit of chatting a bit about the neighbourhood and the neighbours.

Then a great event happened to A 13. He was promoted suddenly by the death of an apoplectic superior, and rose to be a superior himself. The first step led to another, and A 13 one day presented himself at Endle's Rents with three stripes on his arm, and sent in his name by Nan—whose surreptitious game of marbles he interrupted for the purpose—as "Sergeant Goss!"

Quite naturally, Sergeant Goss was asked into the widow's back-parlour, and the eventful day was marked in the annals of Endle's Rents, by the post-mistress sending out for a bottle of Cape-wine (it was before the days of African sherry), and a sixpenny plum-cake from the baker's round the corner.

Sergeant Goss stayed a very long time at the widow's, and Nan secretly ascertained afterwards that there was very little Cape left in the bottle, and nothing to speak of in the way of sixpenny plum-cake.

It was very suspicious.

Everybody in Endle's rents agreed about that.

People remembered then, that within the experience of the oldest Endle's Renter, there had never been a policeman seen on that beat so often as A 13 was seen there.

The case was clear, and when two days after Sergeant Goss came again, and Nan was sent out again, but this time for a bottle of gin, and a clean pipe and a screw, it was more than clear, it was transparent, that the widow was going to marry again.

After that second visit, Sergeant Goss haunted the little post-office in Endle's Rents all the week, in his uniform and his stripes, and came on Sundays in a wonderful dress coat and tight light trousers, and a great black satin stock, covered with gold sprigs, and in which there was soon stuck a Bristol diamond pin,

which a female Endle's Renter solemnly undertook to remember as having been worn by the defunct Stott.

Seldom now was the widow seen over her letters in the little shop after dark, and, therefore, when on this particular evening a young man, in a dark overcoat, darted in out of the fog, in a great hurry, it was irrational in him to express himself, as he did, in hasty and impatient terms, at her absence.

Nan of the blackheaded features informed him that her "missis was engaged partic'lar."

"I must see her!" said the stranger.

"P'raps you'd give me a nam as I could take in to her?" asked Nan, "as she's very partic'lar engaged."

"Certainly, my name is Kingston —"

Before he had finished, Nan was off. She had burst into the parlour behind the shop, leaving the door open, and had pronounced the name like a talisman.

"What! Is the gal mad?" the visitor heard the widow exclaim. "Dan'l Kingston?"

"So he say," reiterated Nan.

"Taint possible," said a male voice, gruff and foggy, "he's in the grave, poor devil!"

It was the voice of Sergeant Goss who uttered these words, and, as he did so, the widow came out with a broad, wondering face, and cursied to the handsome young man who stood in the middle of the shop.

"Mrs. Stott, I believe?" he inquired.

"Cert'n, Stott are my name," was the extra polite, though not strictly grammatical reply.

"Thank you. My name is Kingston Meredith."

He handed a card as he spoke.

"Which, if I may make so bold," said the widow, "you surely are related to the poor, unfortunate man as had my floors going on for them four years and more, for I don't jestly recollect, and was so cruel put out of the way down in the shires somewheres, as well I recollect, and a particular friend of mine, he is a sergeant in the Metropolitan force, naming no names, which it wouldn't become me to do it, says he —"

A loud, deep, sonorous cough from the back-room warned the loquacious widow that she had better be careful in what she said, and she took the hint.

"Well, never mind," she continued abruptly, "taint for me to repeat his words. And so you knew that poor dear man, which head he'd none, no more than a pin —"

"I did: I was with him when he died," said Meredith.

"The deuce you was," said Sergeant Goss, suddenly starting out of the parlour, with his blue coat unbuttoned and flying back, "he died in prison."

"Oh, I was not a prisoner! You needn't be afraid of me," returned Meredith, smiling; "I'm not here to commit a felony."

"I dare say not, sir!" returned the sergeant respectfully; "but it was a rum go that down at Galescombe, as you well-know, and taint cleared up to my mind yet, sir, far from it!"

"You believe the earl innocent?" asked Meredith, anxiously.

"I don't believe nothing. 'Tisn't our way; we wait till a thing's proved, and I may say this much, that he hasn't been proved guilty, not to my satisfaction."

"You would not object to talking this matter over with me?" asked Meredith, his countenance betraying extreme earnestness.

"Well, it's out o' my beat, as a policeman would say," was the reply, "but so far as talking matters over, if you're an interested party, why, I'll say yes!"

"Thank you," said Meredith. "I am indeed, deeply, painfully interested; but of that hereafter. My business in coming here to night, was first to inform Mrs. Stott of a melancholy fact, and then to ask her to assist me in what I have undertaken. Madam," he added, turning to the widow; "you will learn, with regret that poor Kingston's daughter is no more."

"What! Little Emmy Kingston, dead! Deary me, deary me! What are we a-comin' to? Mr. What's-your-name, you might knock me down with a feather, as true as I'm a standing here."

As Meredith had no desire to see the good woman prostrate he did not avail himself of the offer, but proceeded to inform her of the facts respecting the poor girl's death, so far as he was in possession of them.

"And to think!" exclaimed Mrs. Stott, "that that poor dear child, which she was no better, for as to knowing the ways of the world, she didn't—to think of her going and dying in forenooning parts after all! And I, that put it to Kingston, and I never minced matters with him, nor any other man, 'Kingston,' I says to him, 'take her across the water,' says I, 'I won't answer for her life a single minnit.' Nor would I, which it's well be-known, my own brother Tim, as fine a lad as ever stepped in shoe-leather, though wear 'em on board he didn't, neither shoes nor stockings, so he's told me times often, and says I, 'It's your death o' cold,' says I, 'you'll get some o' these fine days,' and he laughs and says, 'never fear' he says; and he's a

layin' now dead, this very minnit in the Bay o' Biscay, with a twenty-pounder or what not, tied to his poor feet."

Meredith sympathised as best he could with the melancholy anecdote thus recorded, and proceeded to state the object which had brought him to Endle's Rents.

"With her last breath," he said, "Kingston's daughter charged me to possess myself of a treasure which she had but too much neglected in life, but on which she set the greatest store. It was her Bible."

"Oh, indeed!" cried Mrs. Stott, her manner suddenly changing, "it was her Bible was it?"

"Yes," he replied, "she left it here on her flight from her lodgings, did she not?"

"Well, p'raps she might, and p'raps she might not, Mr. Clever; anyhow that book don't go out o' my hands."

"What do you mean?" asked the young man.

"What I say, no more and no less. Oh, she told you to fetch that did she, and p'raps you'd like the copy-book as well?"

"The copy-book!"

"Oh, you don't want that? You don't know of it, may be? Well, there's a copy-book, as well as another book, and out o' my house they don't go. No: not if I know it."

It will be seen that Mrs. Stott recollected, perfectly, the conversation which had once passed between her and Lotty, as to the probable value of poor Emmy's books; and though she had heard the name of Kingston Meredith, she did not doubt in her own mind but what this was some impostor, equally aware of the value of the articles, and who was thus trying to gain possession of them.

Sergeant Goss, ever ready to suspect, instantly took his cue from the lady who was about to become his wife, and took up the cudgels on her behalf.

"You may be a very good sort o' feller, sir," he said. "As I dessey you are, but Mrs. Stott, here, isn't that unprotected female that you might have supposed. She's a friend at her elbow, and no mistake. And his advice to her would be, 'don't you part with nothink until you're certain whose hands it's going into.' Specially about this Galescome job. That was a black business, that was."

"True," said Meredith, "and the world has not heard the last of it yet. But you mistake me, whoever you are, and this good woman is deceived likewise, if you suppose that I come here for any other purpose than to possess myself of a relic of one whose memory I shall ever esteem, and who intrusted this commission to me with her dying lips."

Sergeant Goss screwed his lips into an incredulous whistle.

Mrs. Stott shook her head.

"Why," she said, "what's the use o' you, Mr. What's-your-name, standing there and pretending that you're asking for what's o' no vally? You know, as well as I, that there's writings and things about that Bible, and about that copybook, as'll make any clever fellow a earl or a duke, or what not."

"You cannot mean that?" cried Meredith, recalling the scene in the prison at Galescombe, and the extreme agitation of Daniel Kingston on discovering that his daughter had left the book he was in quest of behind her.

"Oh, it's gospel, I can tell ye," was the woman's answer, "which my lodger, old Kingston, he was no fool, though they did say at the Porkeypine as he was a bit cranky. That man was a born deak, if ever there was one, and he'd ha' proved it too, if people would only a listened to him, and not laughed in his face, poor dear. And he'd the proofs there—in they two books, as I've got under lock and key, and mean to keep 'em there."

Meredith was fairly staggered.

Was it possible that the proofs of which he had been in search so long, proofs of his claims to the earldom of St. Omer, were here, here in that little chandler's shop in that wretched street?

If so, the chances which had brought him there were little short of a miracle.

And how annoying it now was that, having got this clue, having seized the ravelled end of what might clear up the mystery of his birth (for he did not doubt that what was of value to Daniel Kingston would aid him also), it should slip through his fingers through this woman's stupidity and the man's official pig-headedness.

"At all events," he said, "you will let me see these books?"

The constable shook his head.

"I shouldn't advise it," he replied.

"And I shouldn't do it if you did," was the widow's rejoinder; "no, no, I've my suspicions about the young man, I can tell you. I didn't like him at first, and I no more believe what he's said about a cock-and-bull story of Emmy Kingston's dying—where did you say it was?"

"At Paris," replied the young man.

"Ah, Jericho's nearer the mark, I should say," retorted the woman, ironically.

"At least," urged Meredith, "you will not object to my seeing the rooms which my poor friend occupied?"

"No, I don't mind that," returned Mrs. Stott, who, in spite of the character for caution she felt bound to keep up, did not altogether regard the stranger as an impostor. "They're to let, and you're as good a right to see 'em as anybody else."

She fetched a candle from the parlour as she spoke, and was about to show the way.

Sergeant Goss, however, had his own views and suspicions, and winking privately to the widow, he took the candle from her fair hand, and with a rough "allow me!" showed Meredith up the stairs.

The rooms were, as we know, at the top of the house, in the roof. They preserved the exact appearance they had worn when Daniel Kingston's daughter sat there day after day, plying her needle for the scanty pittance on which she lived. There, in the corner, still stood her embroidery frame: the pattern incomplete, as left by the small, white hand now rigid in death.

Meredith could not look on that without emotion. Nor could he reflect unmoved on the lot of the two unhappy beings, who born to splendours of which they never had experience, had pined away in poverty in that wretched hole.

"It'd be a satisfaction sir, if you'd leave your name and address," said Sergeant Goss, as the young man was about to descend the stairs.

"Certainly, with pleasure," was the reply.

The sergeant booked the information given with a sniff of satisfaction. If the truth must be told, he also took a few notes as to the stranger's height, build and general appearance. They might be useful, he believed.

This done, they descended together.

No words passed between them until they had reached the floor above the shop.

Then Meredith suddenly started, listened, and turned deadly pale.

"Her voice!" he exclaimed, with suppressed emotion; "it is not possible! Her voice!"

"Whose voice?" growled Goss.

Meredith did not reply, but his heart told him that it was the Lady Blanche whose voice sounded like music in his ears!

(To be continued.)

WOMAN AND HER MASTER.

By J. F. SMITH, Esq.

Author of "The Jesuit," "The Pretate," "Minnigrey," &c.

CHAPTER XLIV.

Are we not flesh and blood? Have ears to ear? And eyes to see!—as well as tongues to speak? Even as our masters have? We should be fools, indeed, Did we not use them.

THE little parlour of the Flower-in-Hand, at Kensington—near to which place the governors resided—was frequented chiefly by the servants of the nobility and gentry living in the neighbourhood. They had their regular nights of meeting, and aped the ridiculous etiquette of their masters in their intercourse with each other.

Thus the valet of a marquis gave himself airs with the coachman of an earl, unless, indeed, the latter happened to hold a seat in the cabinet.

Nothing could be more amusing than the freedom with which they discussed the characters and opinions of those whose liveries they wore. Many a pompous statesman or time-serving place-hunter might have learned a lesson, could he have listened to the strictures of his groom or butler on his conduct.

Although these very aristocratic personages admitted the tradesmen of Kensington to their society, and felt flattered rather than otherwise, by their presence, the servant of a shopkeeper was rigorously excluded. Their place was considered to be the tap-room—a distinction which occasioned as many heart-burnings and jealousies as the struggles for precedence in a more elevated sphere.

This regulation, like the laws of the Medes and Persians, was a thing which altered not. Lord Flytrap's coachman and the duke's butler had far too elevated an idea of their dignity to associate with plumb of low degree; and their masters were the principal magnates of the neighbourhood.

A week after the verdict which decided that Lady Moretown was insane, about a dozen of the liveried fraternity were assembled in the parlour of the little inn, to discuss, as usual, the most private affairs of the families in which they lived.

Some were speculating on the probabilities of their young ladies marrying before the end of the season; others on the sons being ruined, or wondering how the "governor," with so many pulls upon him, contrived to carry on the war.

"So, Tom!" exclaimed a stout, good-looking man, whose purple livery denoted that he drove the apostolic horses of a bishop, "there has been a break-up in your family!"

This was addressed to a lad about eighteen, who for some time had been complacently admiring his well-polished boots, as he sat with his legs stretched out in one corner of the room.

"A break-up?" repeated the boy.

"Ay, your lady has run mad!"

"I wish she had run away! It would have been better for her," answered Tom; "it's my belief she is no more mad than we are."

Several of the fraternity gathered round, delighted with the prospect of a novel piece of scandal.

"It's all my lord's doing," continued the speaker, "and the French governess's: a mean stingy creature—nothing better than *home-bred* to be had at her house!"

The expression of disgust at such conduct was marked and general; and the butler of Lord Holland observed, that such creatures seldom knew how to treat their people.

"I ain't one of her people," observed the groom; "I belong to my lord."

"A distinction," observed the previous speaker, "without a difference."

"She's a bad 'un!" exclaimed Tom, emphatically.

"Lizzy heard her advise my lord to get rid of me, because she found out that we were keeping company; and the old fool would have done so, too, only I knew too much for him! I hadn't stood behind the cab so often for nothing—and so I told his lordship!"

Two more of the dunkey tribe now made their appearance. One was dressed in the royal livery; the other—a tall, good-looking fellow, with enormous black whiskers and moustaches, which half-covered his features—wore the dress of a chasseur—such as we frequently see behind the carriage of an ambassador or foreign nobleman of very high rank.

The royal footman, who was well known, nodded condescendingly to most present.

"Who is your friend?" whispered the bishop's coachman.

"The chasseur of some foreign prince, who is dining at the palace," was the reply. "I brought him out for a change."

"Introduce us, Mr. Beloe."

"It would be no use," said the party, to whom the request was made; "he speaks nothing but Russian, or some outlandish dialect."

"French, perhaps," observed Lord Flytrap's valet, advancing and bowing to the distinguished foreigner. "Parley vous—parley vous, ma chère munseer!"

Something between a sneeze and a whistle escaped from the bearded lips of the stranger.

"Ah, yes! jah—jah!" said the valet, trying to look as if he understood him. "I see, speaks no French, not German."

Not wishing to continue a conversation which might have proved embarrassing to both parties, the speaker retired to his seat at the other end of the room; and the chasseur, taking a chair next to Tom, filled a large pipe, and was soon buried in a cloud of smoke.

The conversation which the arrivals had broken off was resumed.

"I see, Tom," said the coachman, "that whatever the Frenchwoman may be with your master, she is no favourite of yours."

"No, nor missis's either," muttered the lad. "Why, she has no more heart than a stone. Lizzy tells me that it is shameful to see how she pinches and beats the poor little child my lord has placed under her care. All the servants cry shame on her?"

The chasseur began to smoke violently. Tom fancied that he heard him grind his teeth.

"It's my belief," he added, "that the boy won't live long: he begins to look pale and wasted already."

This time it was evident something was the matter with the distinguished foreigner. He almost dropped his pipe.

"I begin to think, Mr. Beloe," observed Tom, "that your friend is getting unwell: perhaps he has smoked too much."

"Smoked too much," repeated the royal footman, with an air of condescension; "impossible—he lives upon it. Do you know," he added, "that in his country they are obliged to burn the dead?"

"Law Mr. Beloe!"

"Fact," continued the speaker; "they smoke so much during their lives, that their bodies, unlike their principles, are incorruptible: they'd last for ever."

"Would they, though?" said the groom, with a look of wonder, which provoked a general laugh at his expense.

Tom saw that he had been jested with, and sat down not over pleased. The speaker, however, was far too important a personage for him to presume to quarrel with.

"Don't be angry!" exclaimed the jester, who saw that he was offended.

"I am not angry," answered Tom, looking at the same time as if he should very much have liked to knock him down.

"No more am I," continued the footman; "and to prove that I am not, you shall accompany me and my friend to the palace; there will be a rare party in the servants' hall by the time we return."

Tom's ill-temper vanished in an instant: it had long been his desire to obtain an introduction amongst the royal servants, and the occasion was not to be refused.

Instead of taking him, as he expected, to the kitchen or servants' hall, on their arrival at the palace, Mr. Beloe conducted his visitors to his own private apartments, and placed wine and biscuits before them.

"I must leave you for a few minutes," he said, "to inquire if his highness has asked for me."

"Don't be long," observed Tom, glancing uneasily at the chasseur.

"Why, you have a companion."

"And a precious one he is," replied the youth; "he looks fierce enough to eat me. Besides, he cannot speak a word of English."

"Can't he?" said the footman, with a knowing wink, as he closed the door; "try him, Tom, try him."

Tom did try him, and so interesting did their conversation prove, that he never once complained of the absence of his host, although it was near midnight before he made his re-appearance.

What the subject of their conversation was, we regret to say, must remain for the present a secret to our readers.

"Do you know him?" inquired the lad of Mr. Beloe, as he conducted him from the palace.

"I know that he is rich," was the reply.

"I know that, too," observed Tom, with an air of satisfaction; "only to think, why he speaks English as well as you or I do."

"Better, Tom," said the footman; "his words have more weight with them. Have you agreed to what he requires?"

"Partly."

"If you are wise, you will do so entirely. It is a good action, and he pays like a prince."

"Or he never would have obtained your help," thought his visitor, as he bade the speaker "good night. If I was sure of Lizzy," he added, as he walked down the avenue, musing on the adventure of the night, "I wouldn't hesitate a minute. Besides, I should like to spite the Frenchwoman!"

Great was the consternation of Lord Moretown and Mademoiselle Athalie when, three days afterwards, little Digby disappeared from the cottage *ornée* inhabited by the latter. Despite their search, and an immense reward which his lordship immediately offered, not the least clue could be found; the servants were all rigorously questioned by Mr. Quirk; who exerted his utmost ingenuity on the occasion; but nothing could be elicited.

"That girl, I feel convinced," said the governess, designating Tom's sweetheart, "knows something, if we could only make her confess."

This, unfortunately for the speaker, was uttered in the presence of the Duke of Ayrton, who had called to learn the particulars of the abduction, and he requested that Lizzy should be sent for; she appeared pale, as if she had been crying very much, but calm and resolute.

"Now, my good girl," said his grace, "Mademoiselle Athalie believes that you know more than you choose to relate of the disappearance of my nephew! Perhaps," he added, you are not aware of the consequence of assisting in such an act? It is a felony, punishable with transportation, at the very least!"

"Indeed, my lord, I know nothing!" she replied.

"You were the last person in the house, your mistress informs me?"

"Yes, my lord, that is, your grace!"

"Never mind 'my grace,'" continued the duke: "but reply to my questions!"

Lizzy made answer that she would.

"You put the child to bed?"

"Yes, my lord."

"And remained!" exclaimed Mademoiselle Athalie, "more than an hour in his room?—my waiting-maid told me so."

"I did!" replied the girl, firmly, but respectfully; "the poor child sobbed and cried so, that I had not the heart to leave him."

"Ridiculous! 'Why should he sob and cry' on that night, more than any other?" demanded the Frenchwoman.

The Duke of Ayrton looked as if he expected an answer.

"I will tell you, my lord," said Lizzy; "it was because he had been beaten and pinched by my mistress that night more severely even than before."

"What!" said Mademoiselle Athalie, at the same time colouring to the very temples. "I beat or pinch the dear child? Insolent, false, wicked creature—I loved him too well for that! This is an attempt,"

she added, "to ruin me in the good opinion of your grace!"

"My good opinion," observed the nobleman gravely, "is not either lost or won very lightly."

"Oh, my lord!" exclaimed the governess, as the earl entered the room; "have you learned any intelligence of the dear boy?"

"None!" replied his lordship, gloomily; "I have been, as you suggested, to the house of Mr. Brindsly, in Lombard-street."

"Has he returned?" demanded Athalie, eagerly.

"No!"

"You are quite sure, my lord?"

"Quite. I saw a letter from him, which had arrived but a few hours before my visit, from Spain! There can be no deception!" he added, in a tone of disappointment; "personally, he can have had no hand in the affair!"

The Duke of Ayrton took his leave of his brother-in-law, whom he sincerely pitied: an affectionate father himself, he was far from suspecting the absence of parental love in his relative. His adieu to the governess were freezingly polite: it was evident that the assertions of the servant had produced a most unfavourable suspicion upon his mind.

"Leave the room!" exclaimed Athalie, in an imperious tone, to Lizzy, who still remained in the drawing-room.

"Why do you speak so harshly to that girl?" inquired the earl.

"Because she has slandered me to the Duke of Ayrton!" was the reply of the governess: "but I'll punish her! I'll—"

"Be prudent!" said the peer; "it is evident that we are watched; an eye we cannot discover is upon us—a hand raised to crush us! Do not provoke it, lest it fall!"

"A coward!" said Athalie, scornfully; "I thought my lord, you had more courage than to tremble at a shadow!"

CHAPTER XLV.

I am not that feather, to shake off
My friend when he most needs me.

Shakespeare.

ABOUT a month after the disappearance of little Digby, Mr. Brindsly returned to England, having arranged the affairs with his correspondents in Spain without loss or any serious difficulty. How the heart of the worthy man beat at the prospect of once more embracing Alice and his godson! Had the hour been suitable, his first visit would have been to them; but it was midnight when he reached London, and he drove to his own house in Lombard-street, where he found the faithful Goliath waiting to receive him.

"Thank Heaven you have returned, sir!" exclaimed the young man, wringing his hand. "The business has not suffered in your absence—the books are ready for your inspection at a moment's notice—the money has been regularly paid into the bank, and the vouchers are all in the counting-house!"

The goldsmith could not help smiling at the earnestness and honest pride with which this was uttered. The feeling at that moment was honourable to both parties: his master had trusted his servant, and his confidence had not been abused.

"Hang the business!" said the old gentleman. "I have had enough of it for a while; we can look over the accounts to-morrow. Tell me, how is my niece and her boy?"

"Do take some refreshment, sir!" replied Goliath, who feared the effect which the mournful intelligence he had to communicate might produce, if imparted too suddenly. "I have not seen her ladyship lately!"

"Not seen her! Why—how so?"

"I did not like to leave the business," answered his assistant, evasively.

Mr. Brindsly seated himself at the table, and tried to eat, but could not. A sudden depression had seized him. He looked long and earnestly in the face of Goliath, and saw that he tried to avoid his gaze.

"Do tell me," he said, "what has happened! Is my niece ill?"

"I believe not."

"The boy—my boy, then?"

"I think I can answer for him," replied the young man, with a peculiar smile, "that he is quite well."

"That God for that!" ejaculated his master piously. "I should never have known a moment's happiness if anything had happened to him! Something has occurred," he added; "I feel there has, and you fear to tell me!"

"Take one glass of wine—your favourite Madeira?" said his assistant, "and I will tell you everything that has passed in your absence. I do not think that you will blame me; I did all that I could, and more, perhaps, than many would have ventured."

"I am sure of that!" exclaimed the goldsmith; "quite sure of that. Tell me all?"

"Take the wine first," urged Goliath, filling the old man's glass.

"There," said Mr. Brindsly, as he drained it off; "now I am nerved for anything."

Goliath left the room for a few moments, and then returned with a file of papers. He first laid before his master the one containing the paragraph which alluded to the insanity of Lady Moretown.

As her uncle perused it, a deep groan escaped him.

"Villain!" he muttered; "heartless, mercenary villain! He has brought her to this state!"

The next paper announced the issuing of the commission.

"Great Heaven!" he exclaimed; "did they meet?"

"They did, sir."

"And I not here to defend her!" continued the old man, bitterly; "her only protector! Oh, 'twas a deep-laid scheme; not a friend to stand up for her! The time was well-chosen!"

"I did all I could," said Goliath, interrupting him; "I consulted Mr. Palgrave—directed him in your name to watch the proceedings: he attended, but the evidence was too strong for him."

"Evidence!" repeated the goldsmith, with a look of incredulity; "and did they deceive you?"

"My lady," continued the young man, "was led into the room. I will not pain you by describing her appearance. Not a word could be elicited from her but 'mad—mad!' Unless," he added, "it was the name of her child!"

Mr. Brindsly started from his seat, and paced the room in a state of fearful excitement. During his long absence he had cheered himself by the anticipation of a happy meeting with the objects of his affection; and the blow was the more terrible from being unexpected. What cared he now for wealth, since those for whom he had struggled to preserve it were lost to him?

"I need not ask the result," he said; "I foresee it!"

Goliath wisely thought that, as he had proceeded thus far, the better way would be to complete his tale of sorrow. When the heart is numbed by the first, it scarcely feels the second blow.

"My lady was pronounced insane, and incapable of managing her property."

"Ay, there it is!" exclaimed the goldsmith, with a burst of honest indignation; "property! Had Alice been poor, this rascal lord—this thing, with no more heart or feeling than the sordid clay of which his nature is composed—had never been her husband. A curse," he added, "clings to her father's wealth! Do you know, Goliath, I often wish that you had been her choice!"

The young man coloured to the temples. In the secret recesses of his heart, in the lonely hours of the night, he had whispered such a wish; but to hear it echoed by the uncle of Alice, sent the warm blood to his cheek.

"I!" he faltered—"I, a poor parish orphan, the husband of your niece! You jest with me, sir!"

"Do!" said Mr. Brindsly, "then never man jest with a sadder spirit. But it is no use thinking of that now. Tell me of the child—the dear boy."

"He was placed under the care of the French governess, Mademoiselle Athalie," replied the young man.

"Curse her!" muttered the goldsmith, bitterly.

"But, strange to say," continued the narrator, "ten days after the countess had been declared insane, the child disappeared!"

"Disappeared?"

"Yes, sir—carried off—no one knew by whom, or how. As you may suppose, the earl made a great outcry—offered an immense reward—but nothing has been discovered! His lordship came here raving like a madman. At first he suspected you," added Goliath, with a smile; "till I satisfied him that the thing was impossible, by producing a letter which I had that very morning received from Spain."

The old man energetically grasped the hand of his assistant, and, fixing his eyes imploringly upon him, pronounced the name of his godson.

Goliath was deeply moved.

"Master," he said, "I know nothing—no more must you! As soon as the earl hears of your return, you will be watched, fresh proceedings taken; for, rely upon it, he suspects that you are at the bottom of the affair. Even if I were acquainted with the place of the child's concealment, or the name of the humble friend who removed him from the cruelty of the Frenchwoman, I should conceal both place and name from you."

"You are right—quite right!" answered the goldsmith, with a sigh; "I should betray myself!"

"You would?"

"I wonder how the dear boy is?"

This was uttered in a tone of such direct inquiry, that it was evident the speaker fancied his assistant could inform him, and most probably by this time our readers imagine the same.

"Of course I cannot answer that question!" replied the young man, archly; "and would not, if I could! But I saw a child three days since—the very picture of health, and so like Master Digby that you could scarcely have told which was which!"

"Thank God!" ejaculated the goldsmith, gratefully; "and those who have watched over him!"

Mr. Brindley's first visit, the following morning, was to his lawyer, to consult him on the propriety of an application to the Chancellor for re-opening the commission.

"It would be useless, my dear sir—quite useless!" answered Mr. Palgrave, in a sympathising tone; "the evidence is too strong—the facts too patent!"

"Why, you don't mean seriously to assert that my niece is insane?" said his client, interrupting him.

"Such is my firm conviction!" replied the man of law; "and I watched the case narrowly! I confess I had my doubts up to the appearance of the countess before the jury—her wild and haggard look—the incoherency of her replies—the utter unconsciousness of the purpose for which we were met—all confirm it! Whatever causes you may have of complaint against her husband in other respects, in this instance, at least, he is blameless! Lady Moretown," he added, in a tone of deep conviction, "is decidedly a lunatic!"

"The earl, then, has made her one!" observed the old man, bitterly; "but I will see him! He shall find that she has at least one friend to protect and interest himself for her! Would I had yielded to her prayer, and remained in England!"

"It might have been better!"

"But I refused," continued the goldsmith, in a tone of self-reproach, "to listen to her prepossessions—and I am punished!"

From the lawyer's, the uncle of Alice drove to the residence of her worthless husband: his lordship refused to see him. He wrote—his letters remained unanswered. Determined not to be baffled, he attended several evenings in the lobby of the House of Lords, and at last caught sight of the titled ruffian, as he was quitting the house, after a late debate, with his brother-in-law, the Duke of Ayrton.

"My lord," he said, confronting him, with a resolute air, "I must speak with you!"

"Must!" repeated the peer, in a haughty tone.

"Unless," continued the old man, "you wish to provoke a scandal! You have been denied to me at your own house!"

"Very probably!"

"Suffered my letters to remain unanswered!"

His lordship shrugged his shoulders.

"And treated me in a manner which neither the courtesies of life nor the near connection which unfortunately exists between us warrants: as the nearest relative of Lady Moretown, I request permission to see her."

"Impossible!" replied the earl; "her medical attendants have declared that the hope of her recovery is in complete exclusion! I am no stranger," he added, in a sarcastic tone, "to the part you have acted, or the advice you instilled into the ears of my unhappy wife. The letters which you addressed to her from Spain have sufficiently enlightened me on that point."

"Doubtless—doubtless!"

"In fact," said his lordship, in conclusion, "I consider the insanity of Lady Moretown, and the consequent destruction of my domestic happiness, entirely the results of your interference between us. I have placed your correspondence in the hands of my legal advisers, and act under their direction; any further communication can only reach me through them. Good-night, sir!"

"You are a villain!" exclaimed the goldsmith, deeply moved by the cool and infamous accusation; "a heartless, titled scoundrel, whom I will expose, if it costs me half my fortune!"

"This is not to be tolerated!" said the Duke of Ayrton; "in the precincts of the house, too! Where is the sergeant-at-arms?"

"Call him, your grace!" said Mr. Brindley, in a yet higher tone; "and the first question I shall ask of your noble brother-in-law will be, by what right he gave the diamonds which I presented to my niece, to his mistress, Mademoiselle Athalie!"

Lord Moretown coloured and bit his lips.

"Or how it happens that the Duchess of Ayrton wore at the drawing-room last week the emeralds which I purchased of her grace for five thousand pounds! But I need not ask that question," he added, bitterly; "doubtless they paid the price of the evidence which induced the jury to pronounce his wife a lunatic!"

To a proud man like the Duke of Ayrton this was a dreadful blow: he felt it keenly, both as a husband and a man of honour.

"You have made a serious assertion, Mr. Brindley," he observed, mastering his emotion.

"No more, your grace, than I can prove!" was the reply.

"You bought the jewels, you say, of my wife?"

"For five thousand pounds, and gave them to my niece. The emeralds which her grace has worn for the last three years were false ones, manufactured by a French house well known in the trade! But at the last drawing-room she wore the real ones!"

"You must be deceived!"

"I am not deceived, and would stake my life and fortune on the truth of my assertion!"

Several of the political opponents of the earl and his brother-in-law, who in passing through the lobby had heard what passed, paused, under pretence of shaking hands with the goldsmith, who was well-known to them, but in reality to annoy their noble rivals.

"Mr. Brindley," said the duke, in a tone of self-command and dignity, "whatever cause, real or imaginary, you may have of complaint, you must feel assured that this is neither the time nor place to urge it! Let me advise you to withdraw—the privileges of the house must be respected."

"You are right, your grace," answered the uncle of Alice; "but that man," pointing to the earl, "has tried me beyond endurance!"

"Call on me in the morning!" continued the duke, "I ask it as a favour."

The goldsmith bowed assent; and his grace, without a word of adieu to his brother-in-law, descended to his carriage.

Although pride and hatred of the woman whom he had so deeply injured had restrained Lord Moretown during the scene we have just described, he was very far from feeling the security and indifference he had assumed. The loss of his son was a terrible blow to his projects. Mr. Brindley, he foresaw, was a man whom he could neither terrify nor cajole.

"I must persevere!" he muttered. "To retrace my steps were to avow my crime, and brave the reproaches of the world. The madness, the folly of Athalie, will be my ruin! Those infernal diamonds! Why did I yield to her entreaties to permit her to wear them. It is evident that we were watched at every step!"

Instead of the entreaties of Mademoiselle Athalie, he should have said the arrogant demand of the unprincipled woman, who had obtained such empire over him that he dared not refuse her slightest caprice. Like many others, the Earl of Moretown, the tyrant of a good and virtuous wife, was the dupe and slave of his mistress.

During his ride home, his lordship decided in his own mind that the goldsmith must be silenced at any price; and he determined to consult the ready instrument of so many rascalities and crimes—Lawyer Quirk—upon the subject.

CHAPTER XLVI

A fish hangs in the net like a poor man's right

In the law—it will hardly come out of it.

Shakespeare.

QUIRK was not surprised at the early visit of his noble client—he expected him; for he had read in the morning papers an account of the *fracas*, as it was termed, in the lobby of the House of Peers.

"Provoking, my lord!" he said; "after having heard the statement of the Earl of Moretown; 'very provoking! But what can you do? You can neither bring him before the Lords for a breach of privilege, nor make a police case of it, without incurring risk—great risk—of an exposure!'"

"What have I to fear?" demanded his visitor, in a haughty tone.

"In person or fortune, nothing, my lord!" replied the lawyer; "everything has been done legally and satisfactorily—I pledge my professional skill for that! But there is such a thing as reputation, which your lordship cannot afford to despise. You are too rich for that. The diamonds are an awkward affair."

"Mr. Brindley will apply to the Chancellor for permission to see his niece," observed the earl.

"Let him," said Quirk, in a triumphant tone; "with such affidavits as we are armed with, it will be rejected. The letters which you so fortunately intercepted, in which the meddling old fool reproaches the countess for not seeking a divorce—vilifies your motives and conduct—form sufficient ground for opposing his application; to say nothing of the opinions of her ladyship's medical advisers, who insist upon her absolute seclusion from society, as the only chance of her recovery; I therefore repeat, that you are quite safe from any annoyance on that score!"

"I am convinced," said the earl, "that the old rascal—for so he termed the goldsmith—is directly or indirectly the cause of the abduction of my son."

"Would we could prove it!" exclaimed Quirk, with a sigh. "Felony, my lord—felony! We should have him at our mercy! But that, I fear, is impossible. He was absent from England at the time."

"And does that blind you?" demanded his client, in a tone of surprise. "I thought you knew more of the world!"

"If it does not blind, it puzzles me," was the reply; "for I can find no clue. It was certainly very cleverly done," he added, with a sort of professional admiration. "The child may one day become more dangerous than his mother."

"How so?"

"He is the heir of the Biddle estate," answered the lawyer. "It was in vain that I combatted against the clause; both Mr. Brindley and his friend Palgrave were obstinate, when the former advanced the money for the purchase of the property, and I was compelled to yield, as the only means of avoiding a Chancery suit. In the event of the death of the countess, her son, if of age, would at once take possession."

"You are a bird of evil omen, Mr. Quirk," observed the peer. "I came to you for advice, and you point out nothing but difficulties."

"Ay," muttered the old man; "the pilot is seldom thanked. If I point them out, it is in order that your lordship should avoid them. The death of your wife would be the greatest misfortune that could happen to you."

Lord Moretown coloured deeply. He perfectly understood the hint which the speaker intended to convey.

"Her physicians are under no immediate apprehensions," he said, "of such an event."

"I am happy to hear it, for your sake," answered his adviser. "And now, my lord, if you really wish for my opinion on the line of conduct to be pursued, I am ready to give it."

"I do wish it, Mr. Quirk. You know the confidence I place in you," was the reply.

"Well, then," resumed the man of law, "at once make application to the Chancellor, that the income of the Digby property be made over to you, as the natural guardian of the countess. The principal, unfortunately, you cannot touch. The old woman, who bore you no great love, guarded against that contingency too well."

His lordship nodded assent.

"Mr. Brindley will doubtless oppose it. But his opposition will be vain. The point will be decided upon precedent. The law, too, is decidedly in your favour. The next point is to watch every movement of the enemy. If the goldsmith is really—as we suspect—acquainted with the hiding-place of his godson, the affection which he bears the boy will doubtless lead him to visit him. By this you will obtain a double advantage. The child will once more be placed under your guardianship, and the discovery arm you with a terrible weapon against his protector."

"You are right!" exclaimed the earl. "I feel that it would be useless to try half-measures with a man of his obstinacy and character. I must crush his interference in my family concerns at once. By-the-by," he added, "how soon can I call for the money advanced by the old miser, Arden, upon the estate of Captain Vernon?"

"In six months, my lord," replied the lawyer. "But the investment is an exceedingly good one."

"No matter!"

"The interest regularly paid."

"I must call it in, notwithstanding," said his client, with an air of embarrassment. "The fact is, I wish to make a settlement—a provision, for a person who is decidedly very dear to me; and I see no other means, unless I again incur my estates, which I am resolved not to do."

"Incur your estates," repeated Mr. Quirk. "I am afraid your lordship would find that difficult."

"How so?"

Quirk proceeded to explain to him that the mortgage deeds for the various sums advanced by his father-in-law, Nicholas Arden, never having been found, there was a possibility that the old man had transferred them to a second party, or raised money upon them.

"Ridiculous supposition!" exclaimed the peer, interrupting him.

"There is another risk," added the lawyer, perfectly unmoved; "the chance of the miser's will being brought to light; and from all I could glean in my different visits to Essex, it is certain that he made one. Who knows what settlements or contingencies it might contain?"

His client felt uneasy: the possibility of such a discovery had repeatedly haunted him, but he had shaken it off. Success in his long career of crime had hardened him.

"You fight with shadows," he replied; "but they do not startle me. After having subdued my living enemies, it would be hard indeed to see my fortunes ruined by a blow levelled from the grave."

"And yet I have seen it in my time, and may again," thought Quirk; but he merely smiled.

It was finally arranged between the men, in every respect so worthy of each other, that proceedings should be instituted in Chancery, praying that the income of the Digby estates should be paid to the Earl of Moretown, during the incapacity of his wife to manage her own affairs, to be applied to her support.

At the same hour that his brother-in-law quitted the office of his legal adviser, the Duke of Ayrton entered the dressing-room of the duchess. He found the still beautiful but artful woman in company with her eldest daughter—a lovely girl of eighteen—examining the contents of her jewel-case, arranging what gems they should wear at a ball about to be given at the Austrian embassy.

The heart of the high-spirited, honourable noble experienced a bitter pang as he gazed upon the mother of his children, and remembered how cruelly she had deceived him.

"Oh, papa," exclaimed his daughter, "I am so glad you are come. You shall decide between us."

"Decide what?" answered the duke, abstractedly.

"I have decided."

Both the ladies looked up to him with surprise.

"Have decided?" repeated the fair girl, in a tone of surprise.

"How can that be, when you have not yet been informed of the difference of opinion between mamma and myself?"

"Caroline," said the duchess—her daughter had been named after her—"wishes to wear diamonds at the ambassador's ball. I tell her pearls will become her better."

"What say you, papa?"

His grace took the speaker by the hand, and, drawing her towards him, kissed her on the forehead.

"Never mind the jewels, Caroline," he said; "the brightest gems which can adorn your sex are those of innocence and truth!"

"Is your grace dreaming?" inquired the duchess, with a satirical smile; "or have you been poetising lately?"

"Neither, madam!" was the cold rejoinder. "I have been awakened, and somewhat rudely, from a dream—which, unfortunately, lasted for years!"

"I do not understand you!"

"Caroline," said her father, "retire to your own room. I will send for you presently."

The girl looked first at the speaker, then at her mother—whose countenance expressed the utmost surprise and uneasiness.

"You are angry," she said, throwing her arms around his neck; "but not with me! Do say, papa, that it is not with me!"

The duke assured her that it was not, and sealed the assertion with a paternal kiss. Still his daughter would have lingered; but no sign of encouragement detained her. The manner of her father had become cold, even stern, as he pointed to the door.

"Oh, Frederick!" exclaimed the duchess, the instant they were alone; "what is the meaning of this?"

"It means, madam," said her husband, "that I have been outraged and insulted on your account!"

"On mine?"

"Accused," continued his grace, indignantly, "of having given the evidence I did touching the insanity of the Countess of Moretown, in order to obtain from your brother the restoration of the jewels which you assured me you had lent him for his wife to appear at court in!"

"And who," demanded the duchess, "dared to make such a ridiculous accusation against your honour?"

"The man to whom you had previously sold them for five thousand pounds, and who, it seems, gave them to his niece!"

"False—false!" murmured the guilty woman, faintly.

"I am happy to hear you say so!" answered her husband, bitterly; "I expect him here in a few minutes: of course you will repeat the denial in his presence! The insolent slanderer!" he added, with pretended anger; "I shall immediately instruct my solicitor to commence an action against him for defamation!"

So saying, he seated himself at the table, and began to write.

Overwhelmed by the suddenness of the discovery, the guilty woman knew not how to act: once or twice she advanced with the intention of throwing herself at the feet of the man she had deceived, and confessing everything; but pride and a reliance on her powers of dissimulation restrained her.

Little did she deem that the moments when such a step could have availed her were rapidly passing away.

"You will be ready, Caroline," said the duke, still continuing to write, "to go out with me in an hour?"

"Yes!" faltered his wife.

"It is necessary that you should make an affidavit previous to commencing an action against this man, that his accusation is slanderous and false!"

Without knowing what she said, in her confusion and shame, the unhappy creature again answered:

"Yes!"

Greatly shocked, the duke dashed down the pen, and started from his seat.

"And would you add perjury," he exclaimed, "to meanness and falsehood? Have I not seen the letters

to the man, in which you beg—that is the word—beg of him to delay parting with the gems? The Duchess of Ayrton—my wife—the mother of my children," he added, with a bitter laugh, "begging of a tradesman for time and indulgence to conceal the lie—the vile, degrading lie—she had uttered to her husband!"

"Frederick, for pity's sake, mercy—mercy!"

"Mercy!" repeated the deeply-excited nobleman; "what mercy have you had on my reputation? What thought of me or of my children? From year to year you have pursued the same round of heartless dissipation and deceit! I endured it with more than a husband's patience, because I looked forward to the time when you would awake to reason with more than a husband's hope!"

The tone of lofty indignation and reproachful tenderness in which these words were uttered, proved how deeply he felt the degradation of the woman whom he had so tenderly loved.

The duchess was vanquished—because unmasked.

"You will leave London, madam, in the morning, for Scotland," he continued; "and remain at my seat in the Highlands till I have decided on the future arrangements between us!"

At these dreadful words the unhappy woman threw herself upon her knees, and attempted to clasp his hand—but he withdrew it from her.

"My children," she exclaimed; "my children! you will not separate me from them!"

"You are unfit to have the care of them!" was the cold rejoinder. "I cannot permit their unpolluted minds to come in contact with their mother's!"

Poor Alice! Could she have seen the degradation and agony of her enemy at these stern words, which announced the determination of the duke, she would have avowed that her injuries were more than in part avenged.

"But one!" she faltered—for, with all her folly and vice, she loved her children; "but one, Frederick!—only one!"

"The carriage will be at the door by daybreak!" answered her husband, coldly; "the children remain with me! Unless you wish the goldsmith," he added, "to be a spectator of your humiliation, you will retire to your room—I am about to send for him here!"

So saying, he rang the bell.

Overwhelmed with shame and confusion, the duchess, not daring to meet his gaze, tottered rather than walked from the apartment. Her haughty soul was humbled, but not penitent; and in her secret heart she bitterly cursed the unhappy Alice, and drew consolation in her own sorrow from the misery which she felt assured she was enduring.

When Mr. Brindley entered the room, he found the duke as calm and stately as usual; every trace of emotion had vanished from his aristocratic features.

"Mr. Brindley," he said, "I have perused these letters, and am convinced that one part of your story is at least correct! The emeralds were bought by you!"

The goldsmith merely bowed.

"I could have wished," continued the speaker, "that they had not passed from my family: it was intended, I believe, that they should be an heir-loom. Is there no arrangement by which I can retain them?"

"I presume, your grace," replied his visitor, "that they are yours already, or at least the property of the duchess! When I presented the jewels to my niece, I made no stipulations. Lord Moretown," he added, bitterly, "has the power to dispose of them!"

"The power," said the high-minded nobleman, "certainly, but not the right—at least, as men of honour understand the word!"

So saying, he advanced to the table and opened the jewel-case, from which he took the matchless gems—the cause of so much envy and unhappiness—and placed them in the hands of Mr. Brindley.

"What am I to do with them?" demanded the goldsmith.

"Retain them for your niece!" replied his grace; "or, in the event of her death, for her representative. My honour requires that they should be restored—unless, indeed, you choose to accept as an equivalent the price you paid for them?"

"I cannot do that, your grace!"

"Or any sum you may choose to name?"

"It is not the money, my lord duke!" exclaimed Mr. Brindley; "it is not the money—but a gift is a gift; and I have no power to dispose of that which is no longer mine!"

"You are right—very right!" said his grace, closing the *cristal*, and handing it to his visitor. "The same law is imperative on both of us! Your honour requires that you should not sell—mine that the duchess does not retain them!"

So saying, he bowed, to intimate that their interview was at an end; and the worthy goldsmith left the house.

(To be continued.)

SOME years ago a rich banker of Berlin was robbed to a very great extent by one of his clerks, who fled to America with his spoils. A few days ago the banker received a letter, and with it the entire sum of money of which he had been robbed. The thief made a large fortune in America, and, being mortally wounded in an engagement against the Confederates, he desired that he might be carried to the hospital in order to make his will, which he was enabled to accomplish before dying. In his will he left his former employer the money he had taken from him.

SHIPWRECK AND SINGULAR INCIDENT.

A CORRESPONDENT of the *Dublin Express*, writing from Queenstown, reports the total loss of the *Coluden*, a large ship of 1,300 tons, which left Quebec on the 18th September, with a valuable general cargo. She met with moderate weather until the 10th October, when a fearful gale arose, sweeping everything off the decks. She remained with just sufficient canvas to keep her out of the trough of the sea until the 12th, when a tremendous sea hit her partly on the broadside, and smashed the rudder into useless fragments. It was now hopeless to think of saving the vessel, as the carpenter came aft with the report that the ship was making water so fast that she would go down in a few hours.

Captain Ness and wife, 33 seamen, and Mr. White, passenger, took to the boats, but with such haste, that only a small quantity of provisions could be taken, and a large and beautiful Newfoundland dog was forgotten. He appeared on the bulwarks soon after, but of course he had to be left to his fate. Half-an-hour afterwards the tall masts of the ship disappeared beneath the waves, and the bleak prospect of the stormy sky and angry billows, was all that remained to those in the boats. They kept tossing about till the 14th, suffering from the piercing winds and rain, which kept pouring down all the time they were in the boats. About noon on the 14th one of the men perceived a faint speck above the horizon, and soon afterwards the hull of a barque was visible. A large table-cloth, brought for the purpose, was waved from an oar, and the signal was shortly after answered by the barque, which proved to be the *New Brunswick*, of Bristol from New York.

The following paragraph from *Galignani* probably explains the fate of the Newfoundland dog left on board the *Coluden*:—The English schooner *Theodore*, which arrived at Havre the other day from Newcastle, picked up at sea, about ten miles from the English coast, a fine Newfoundland dog, which was standing on a piece of timber about two yards long, forming part of the wreck of some vessel, other portions of which were seen floating near. When the dog, which is a very fine animal, saw the schooner's boat approaching, it jumped into the water and swam to meet its deliverers. It has since evinced the greatest attachment to the captain.

Two officers belonging to the Prussian army, Herr Rauterl and Herr von Nyenheime, of the 39th regiment, were summoned before her Majesty, the Queen of Prussia, at Coblenz, last week, on account of their having at the risk of their own lives saved that of a poor woman who had fallen into the Rhine. The Queen, when she saw them, held out her hand to each, and said, "How the King would rejoice to hear this!" The next morning she sent them each a gold medal, with the portrait of herself and the King on it, in token of her appreciation of their gallant conduct, and invited them to dinner.

LORD PALMERSTON'S EPISCOPAL PATRONAGE.—The total annual value of the twenty-seven sees of England and Wales is £151,200, and during a premiership of little more than seven years, it has fallen to Lord Palmerston to dispose of nearly the half of that sum. Of the twenty-seven prelates who sit in the House of Lords, no less than ten have been placed there by Lord Palmerston. Add to these five Irish sees, and the number of the present premier's bishops is increased to fifteen. Twice has he filled the Archbishopric of York, once the Archbishoprics of Canterbury and Armagh. Three times has the noble lord been called to appoint new overseers to the dioceses of Gloucester, and Bristol, and Durham; twice has he filled the vacant bishoprics of Carlisle and Cork, and once those of London, Rochester, Norwich, Worcester, and Ripon. Of the twenty-seven prelates on the episcopal benches, ten owe their positions to Lord Palmerston; five to Sir Robert Peel; four to Lord Russell; three to the Earl of Aberdeen; two, the bishops of Peterborough and St. David's, to Lord Melbourne; one, the Bishop of Winchester, to Lord Liverpool; one, the Bishop of Exeter, to the Duke of Wellington; and one, the Bishop of Bangor, to the Earl of Derby. The senior prelate is the Bishop of Winchester, appointed 1827; the junior the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, consecrated in 1868. The richest bishopric is

that of Winchester, value £10,417; the least, in point of revenue, is that of St. David's, £2,500. The oldest prelate is the bishop of Exeter, now in his eighty-sixth year, the youngest is the Archbishop of York, now in his forty-fourth year.

CHERISHED WRATH.

"The young man's wrath is like straw on fire,
But like red-hot steel is the old man's ire."

It was a sultry summer afternoon, and over a dusty road, along which but few houses could be seen, tottered a bowed and grey-headed old man, humbly clad, and evidently sinking under the fatigue of travel and the oppressive heat. His mind seemed as ill at ease as his body, for he muttered despondently as he crept slowly along; and his shrivelled face was indented with deep lines, indicative of a life of cares and sorrows.

Reaching the gate of a handsome mansion, with trembling hand he opened it, passed up a flowery walk, and rang the bell.

A sad but comely-looking lady, in the meridian of life, attired in black, answered the summons; and, compassionating his age and apparent distress and poverty, as he asked for a draught, a morsel of food, and directions on his way, she bade him enter, set refreshments before him, and expressing her pity, listened to his vague complaints of fortune's reverses, and his helplessness in his infirm old age.

While thus he mourned, he raised his eyes to the portrait of a young man, and, with a sudden look of apprehension, inquired the name of the family.

"My own name is Tully," she replied; "I am a widow, with two children now absent from home. The name of my father, who is the only other occupant of the house, is John Mortimer."

"And that is he?" said the stranger, pointing excitedly at the picture.

"It is. He does not much resemble it now, for it was taken when he was but twenty-five, and he is now nearly as old as you appear to be. Could you have known him? Your own name, if you please?"

"Parkman," said the stranger, faintly; adding that, as the picture was an old one, and bore some resemblance to herself, he had guessed the likeness to be that of her father.

"He is asleep now," said the lady. "When he wakes, I think he will be glad to converse with you, and offer you some relief."

"No, no," hastily replied the stranger, rising; "I will be on my way. A storm is coming on, and I must seek some shelter in the village beyond."

"It will overtake you before you can reach the village," warned the lady. "You had better remain where you are. You are welcome."

The suddenly-darkening sky, the rising gale, and flying clouds of leaves and dust, with quick flashes of lightning and deep-toned thunder, heralded the approach of the storm which soon discharged its drenching torrents upon the neighbourhood, and for the time seemed to turn day to night.

"You had better remain and take a bed for the night, Mr. Parkman, and go refreshed in the morning."

The stranger nodded his assent, and resumed his seat with thanks; and leaning upon his hands he whispered to himself:

"He may not remember me."

At this moment the door was opened, and a white-haired man entered the room. It was the lady's father, John Mortimer, whose portrait had so agitated the lingering stranger.

Mrs. Tully explained the necessity of the case, whilst Mortimer confirmed her welcome, and the two old men grasped hands.

"You are welcome to stay, Mr. Parkman," said Mortimer, and then abruptly turned to a window, as if to note the progress of the storm.

"He does not know me, but it is he!" reflected the stranger. "He thinks my name is Parkman, as I said. Ah! I have changed in looks and fortune quite as much as in name."

"This storm will last," predicted Mortimer. "It will be a rough night." And then turning familiarly to the stranger, he invited him to see the various apartments of the house; and having shown him pictures of "his first and second wives" in an adjoining parlour, he led his guest up-stairs.

The portrait of the first wife had also been recognized by the aged guest, and he strove to suppress the timidity it caused. He trembled still more, when, entering an upper room in the rear of the house, Mortimer closed the door, and gazing steadily into his quailing eyes, addressed him in a stern, determined, yet melancholy tone:

"This is your chamber—Lawyer Dana Wiley—for the night, or as long as you live. Be seated."

There was wildness in the sunken eyes of both these old men, as they took chairs opposite each other, Mortimer nearer the door; but that of Wiley expressed

fear, while that of Mortimer denoted some dread purpose. Ever and anon, during the interview, peals of thunder shook the building to its foundations, and sheets of lurid lightning added to the ghastliness of their ash-pale features.

"I see that you recollect me," almost shrieked Wiley, lifting a bony finger, as if in warning. "You mean me no good!"

Mortimer nodded, decisively, as he replied: "The memory of a heart like mine can never fail; it strengthens, rather, with increase of years, which intensify the torments it has borne. Forty years are a long, long time; but their sufferings have kept indelible the images of those who caused them. Your hated face no time could cause me to forget, for through your malignity my happiness has been blasted, and existence made worthless to me."

"I was a lawyer, and fulfilled the duties for which I was engaged, when I advocated your wife's suit for divorce," said Wiley, in a pleading tone; but he paused, as he watched the smile, horrible to him, which for an instant played over the face of Mortimer, as he repeated, emphatically:

"One fatal remembrance, one sorrow that throws
Its bleak shade alike o'er our joys and our woes,
To which life nothing darker or brighter can bring,
For which joy has no balm, and affliction no sting."

"That has been my remembrance," he loudly exclaimed, his heaving breast denoting the grief and fury he strove to suppress, that he might the better tell his story. "Miserable hireling, vile mouthpiece of the law, which you disgraced, and whose intents you perverted, knowingly, knave; knowingly! Silence! It was your court privilege to speak then; it is mine now. There is here now no judge but the One above; there are no witnesses but ourselves and these noisy elements. You were then a rising lawyer, flushed by the success of your venal impertinences, your influence at the bar, and your imagined impunity, when persecuting a poor young man like me. You knew I had married without her father's consent; that he was a harsh, bigoted, relentless man; and that my temporary adversity prohibited our living in such style as might have soothed his pride, if not his venomous, unscrupulous enmity. You knew the base intrigues to which he stooped, to wheedle her away from her husband's hearth, ay! and even from honour itself, so that my misery could be accomplished. Young as she was, her sense of moral obligation, was easily deadened by her insidious father, and her vanity, flattered by the praises of the unprincipled, whom he drew around her; you knew that her perversity and her neglect of home, by them inspired, had sometimes stung me into harsh reproofs; and for this, and only this, false, heartless hound of the law, willing tool of bribery, miscreant, you organized your band of perjured creatures, and lied me from a husband's claims. My honest indignation was domestic cruelty; my tenacity of love was tyranny; the provocations, the indignities, the wrongs I bore, my sacred hearth, and my before unsullied name, were all nothing to you. You took your Judas' pay, and wrought my martyrdom."

"Tut, tut! It was but a lawyer's case and fee," replied Wiley, white with excess of fear, and endeavouring to be persuasive.

"Tut me no tute!" thundered Mortimer, with increased indignation, "or I'll strangle you where you sit. I am the pleader here. You did more. Iniquitous as you knew the cause to be, you revelled in the ruin in which you involved me. You overstepped even a hireling lawyer's custom, and gratuitously insulted me in court. You heaped terms of opprobrium upon me, me! an honest, poor, outraged and prostrate man. You indulged your small wit, too, for your devilry was successful. Guilt passed bluish and triumphant from the court, and innocence, witless, homeless, though not friendless, retired to heal the wounds you had given, as best it might."

"She was but partly divorced. If you loved her so well, you might have married her again."

"Cold, shameless villain, no! Society, more just than law, placed its ban upon her odious course. The public disgrace she had incurred by it, alienated her for ever, even as her father had thought. Notoriety attended all her steps, and you and all men knew that the reckless woman turned to common folly."

"I was not the keeper of her chastity, sir! I but pleaded the case, and then had done with it and her. If she became bad after, you should have been glad of the release, without which you might have been dishonoured more. Your hands were clear, if hers were not; and were it my case, I should have been glad to see her descend to infamy."

"No doubt," hoarsely muttered Mortimer. "Your confession spares me the trouble of much contumely. You would still be vile, in triumph or defeat. But, trickster, your logic cannot juggle with me. I cannot forget that you smoothed the way for her disgrace as well as mine; and my debt is double to you. I never ceased to think of that. Weary of the scenes, once happy, but then made cheerless, I removed far away

from them; and when at times I heard of her downward course, and your prosperity, I prayed to God that your own hour of disgrace and despair might come—and at last, I heard of it. It had come."

"It had, sir, it had!" assented Wiley, eagerly; hoping, by impressing upon his enemy the fact of his own distress, it might help to disarm him of any revengeful intention.

"You fled from a charge of forgery."

"I did. It ruined me completely."

"And you were obliged to change your name?"

"I was, for safety."

"But your nature and your crimes remained?"

"My miseries have! Mr. Mortimer, if you only knew how much I have lost, and suffered; how I have been compelled to skulk, for years, from one place to another, you would pity me."

"Would I? No; defamer, destroyer, hireling, forger, vagabond, outcast, no! I have lost track of you for these many years, or, had we met in secret, your sufferings would have been shortened."

"What do you mean? If you had wished my life, you might have taken it at first, when we both were young, and you knew where to find me."

"True. You deserved to die then; but my wrath was not then so great. It remained for years of agony to give it growth, and good revenge into resolve."

"Yours was not a broken heart. You married again."

"An honest wife, whose pure soul rests in heaven no purer than she was while here. But even her companionship could not restore the lost bloom of the heart, withered through all these years, through your accursed villany. She died, and so died the last mild influence I have had on earth, or expect during my few remaining days. Years of widowhood, if I may call it such, and of increasing age, increasing the sinful pondering over a joyless life, have nurtured but one plant in the wide waste of my desires. That plant is, revenge! Now, near my end, Heaven has sent you. If you escape, may Heaven bless you!"

"Mercy on us!" now cried the appalled fugitive, glancing uneasily at the door, which Mortimer, rising, had locked. "What would you do? Would you do a murder? Think of your age and mine. It does not befit an old man to cherish such feelings at the verge of the grave. We are both near our end."

"One of us surely is!" cried Mortimer, springing upon his victim, who grappled convulsively with his assailant, and shrieked for help.

The noisy interview had before alarmed the daughter, Mrs. Tully, who, on hearing the violent encounter, knocked frantically at the door.

"Begone, Ellen!" shouted her father. "I am paying a debt. You shall not enter till I get a full receipt."

"Break the door, madam!" screamed Wiley, protracting his resistance as adroitly as he could. "Break in, or your father will commit a murder. He is mad, woman, mad! O God, help me! Run for help."

"Ellen, don't stir out of the house, unless you wish to send your father to the gallows."

Whether she replied or not, he could not hear; for just then an awful clap of thunder deadened the hearing to all else, and the broad flash which attended it blinded the struggling old men for a moment.

Fierce as was the shock, Mortimer did not loosen his hold. Had an earthquake yawned, he would not.

Not so with his less-nerved opponent. His hold relaxed. Mortimer, recovering his sight, saw his eyes close, and felt the shudder which convulsed his victim's frame. The man resisted no more. Freeing himself from the powerless hands, Mortimer stood apart, and the body of his foe fell to the floor.

The dull thump of the fall seemed to restore Mortimer to a calmer mood. He stared for a moment at the prostrate form, then stooped, and placed his hand over the heart, and his ear to the lips. No pulse. No breath.

With a yell of blended agony and exultation he sprang from the body, unlocked the door, and left the chamber.

When the neighbours summoned by the daughter had arrived with her—for, hoping to avert the catastrophe, she had rushed out into the storm—no sound within was heard.

"They may have made it up," said one.

A shriek from the daughter was the response.

Through the open door of the parlour the corpse of her father was discovered, his face lacerated, his garments torn, one hand holding the miniature of his first wife, the other a bunch of grey hair. He had died from exhaustion of his dismal victory, and still held its trophy and its spur.

"Yet he was not a murderer!" announced those who examined the dead form of the recreant lawyer.

A blue hole was discovered in the region of the heart. Even while he was struggling in the clasp of Mortimer, the blinding lightning had passed through the building, and sent him swiftly to a world where law and justice are but one. E. O. W.



THE SIBYL CLIFF.

CHAPTER I

THE HOUSEKEEPER.—FAMILY MATTERS.—AN OFFER REJECTED.

ONE night, late in the autumn of a bygone year, the wind whistled among the fallen foliage of the trees that surrounded Oakland Manor House, situated in a wild tract of country on the east part of the English coast. The rain fell heavily, and every now and then, as a sudden and fierce gust swept over the mansion, its inhabitants would felicitate themselves on their having the protection of a roof over their heads, whilst an occasional commiserating remark for the unsheltered and forlorn, for the mariner at sea, and the houseless wanderer on shore, indicated that its inhabitants were not altogether destitute of those humane feelings, which, as a whole, are more frequently found to pervade the breasts of our rural, than our urban population. Be this as it may, however, amongst the occupants of Oakland Manor House, were two persons, who were seated in a private room, and who enjoyed the countenance and favour of their master, Sir George Franklin, the owner of the broadlands which formed the estate of Oakley Manor House.

One of these was the legitimate occupant of the apartment, Mrs. Bell, an elderly lady in a good state of preservation, quiet, well-dressed, and with all the air of a gentlewoman, and the other a man of sixty, portly, pompous and well-fed. Mr. Solomon Glosser filled the important post of butler, and the blooming hue of his cheeks, to say nothing of the suspicious tinge of the most prominent feature of his face, indicated a pretty thorough acquaintance with the treasures of the department of the household committed to his charge. Nature, in furnishing forth his organization, had assigned him but a scant allowance of brains, though the deficiency was perhaps compensated by an overabundant supply of conceit. Few, however, suspected him of being a fool, for he had the art of looking like a wise man, and knew how to hold his tongue when silence is the best sort of eloquence. Wise men often look like fools, and idiots like Solomons, and the world, which always judges by appearances, is generally mistaken in its estimate of both classes.

Mrs. Solomon Glosser, always in good-humour with himself, was disposed to take the world easily, and make the most of the good things that fortune threw in his way. He was now expanding his broad palms

[THE STRUGGLE ON SIBYL'S CLIFF.]

to the genial influence of the seacoal fire that flamed and sputtered in the grate, and remarked:

"A coal fire is very comfortable on a cold evening."

This proposition admitting of no discussion, he proceeded to add his opinion that it was "very cold for the season," to which the housekeeper assented.

After a moment's silence, Mr. Glosser stated that he thought that tea was but cold comfort on an autumnal evening, and suggested that he might be induced to flank the little silver tea pot which graced the housekeeper's table by producing a bottle of Burgundy, if the contribution would be acceptable. The offer having been rather drily declined, Mr. Glosser contemplated the fire for some moments in that state of mind which has been designated a brown study. Tired of this amusement, he again addressed the housekeeper.

"Mrs. Bell, ma'am, I think it is just ten years since Mr. Arthur, the baronet's son, disappeared."

The housekeeper nodded. "Wrapped up in her own thoughts, she seemed to be paying little heed to the butler's talk."

"Which it was a cruel thing for him to do, ma'am," said the butler: "for it came amiss breaking his father's heart, ma'am, though that heart is made of true British hoak."

A slight tinge of colour rose to the pale cheek of the housekeeper, as she replied, with a little warmth:

"Arthur Franklin disappeared just after a scene with his father, in which the baronet was more than usually violent. Arthur came honestly by a warm temper of his own, and was probably inconsiderate in his manner of meeting the storm. But what passed between them is a secret known only to themselves. Arthur disappeared, and his father does not know whether he is alive or dead at this moment."

"I never heard Sir George mention his son's name."

"Nor I either," said Mrs. Bell, "in conversation with any one; but I have more than once heard the name escape his lips when he thought no one was listening."

"You don't happen to know, ma'am," inquired the butler, "whether the old gent hever took any steps to reclaim him, such as an advertisement in the London Times, as follows: 'If A. F. will return to the arms of his afflicted parent, Sir G. P. of O. M., all will be forgiven and forgot, and no questions asked?'"

"I have reason to believe that Sir George never did anything of the kind. It would have been a step inconsistent with his pride; he is like one of the oaks that give their name to his estate—he will sooner break than bend."

"A willer is a safer tree," said the butler, "with a consciousness of having uttered a profound remark; and further observed that 'the loss of his son and heir had been in a measure made up to him.'"

"Nothing can make up such a loss," said the housekeeper.

"I beg your pardon, ma'am," said the butler; "there's where I differ from you. Surely Sir Rashleigh Brandon, the son of his deceased sister, Lady Althea Brandon, has been a son to him. Received as an orphan, he has grown up here like—like one of the family."

"He has been treated as such," said the housekeeper, drily, "and he has great expectations as Sir George's heir."

"What a young man he is!" said the butler. "Ow sedate! You rarely see a smile upon his face. He is always a studying and a thinking."

"There seems something unnatural to me," said Mrs. Bell, "in a young man that never smiles. An old head on young shoulders has always seemed to me an anomaly."

"A what?" cried the butler with a look of horror.

"Something uncommon."

"Aye, indeed, he is a very uncommon kind of young man, is Sir Rashleigh," said Mr. Glosser. "When he isn't cramming his head with figgers and foreign langwidges, he busies himself with his uncle's accounts. It would seem as if he could never do too much to repay the baronet's kindness. The rental of the estate has been increased thirty per cent. since he has managed the business."

"The tenants were happier and more comfortable, perhaps, under the old steward," said the housekeeper.

"Tenants, ma'am," said the butler, "is always ungrateful; always pleading poverty—always behind-hand. I never heard any of them complain that Sir Rashleigh was unjust."

"Justice and mercy should go hand-in-hand, when the poor are to be dealt with."

"You are altogether too soft-hearted, ma'am," said the butler. "The lower orders is always rebellious, and always ought to be severely dealt with. It's no kind of use handling of them with gloves. Mrs. Bell, if I were not Sir George's butler, I should like to be a parish beadle."

"A beadle, Mr. Glosser?"

"Ay, mum," said the butler, with a slight glow of enthusiasm. "It has been a dream of mine, to be a beadle. I have hoften imagined myself clothed in the professional uniform, with this head—which my friends have told me is a long one, speaking with a figger, surmounted by a gold-laced cocked hat; with these

here manly limbs (not to put too fine a point upon it—legs) clothed in knee-breeches and white stockings, with scarlet cape upon my shoulders and dazzling buttons on my coat, and the rattle, the terror of evil-doers, grasped in my right hand. Wicked boys, ma'am, would not then, as they do sometimes now, insult me with impunity."

Mrs. Bell made no comment on this unusually long speech; indeed her manner indicated that she considered Mr. Glosser's visit had been already somewhat prolonged. She glanced, from time to time, at her watch, and once or twice made no polite effort to conceal a yawn. But Mr. Glosser was one of those self-satisfied and obtuse individuals who could not take a hint even if it were shot at them out of an Armstrong gun. The idea that he could ever be tedious, never entered his head, though there was room enough for that and a good many other ideas, without any danger of their interfering with each other.

"Mrs. Bell," said he, with an emphasis which we could only indicate by the employment of capitals; "I have inaugurated a war with the lower, or, in other words, the insubordinate classes of society. It is a defensive war, mum, not a aggressive war."

"Good Heavens! what do you mean, Mr. Glosser?" cried Mrs. Bell, for even she, as well as she knew him, was imposed upon by his intensely solemn earnestness.

"Mrs. Bell," said the butler, with gloomy severity; "beings—boys have committed ravages in the park of Oakland Manor-house. The stockade fence has been scaled, dry branches have been abducted, chest-nuts have been stole. You have not walked in the park, recently, I think, ma'am," he added, sinking his voice to a not unmelodious whisper.

"Not very recently," said the housekeeper, faintly.

"Well, ma'am," resumed the butler, with an air of triumph, "if you had done so, you would have noticed a number of signs, I call them signs of the times, whereon are printed in black letters on a white ground, the warning, 'Beware of man-traps and spring-guns.'"

"You don't mean to say," said the housekeeper, now really alarmed, "that you have been setting spring-guns in the shrubbery?"

Mr. Glosser smiled—the smile of a superior at the ignorance of an inferior being.

"No, ma'am—no, ma'am," he replied, with a wave of the hand, "no notices, put up at my suggestion by Sir Rashleigh Brandon, are simply a warning; but," he added, "if that warning is unheeded, then man-traps and spring-guns will be placed, at intervals, throughout the park, in fact."

"And you assure me, then," said the housekeeper, "that if, to-night, for instance, this dark, stormy night, some poor cottager should be tempted to intrude and help himself to a fagot of sticks, of no earthly use to Sir George, he will be safe from mutilation or death?"

"As safe as you or I," replied the butler, condescending to indulge in a familiar wink.

Probably the more to reassure her, the butler now drew his chair nearer to the lady, and continued the conversation in the vein of egotism which was habitual to him.

"Mrs. Bell," said he, "should you like to see a picture of my mind?"

Mrs. Bell, too weary to interpose an objection, replied by an affirmative nod.

"I pass over my aspirations to a headship as a dream," said the modern Solomon; "but I have another idea which I have revolved till it is, as one may say, done brown. I have seriously, and for a long time, thought of retiring from service, and with the accumulated savings of my life, setting up a public house, to which, out of gratitude to Sir George, I purpose to give the name of the Franklin Harma."

"Not a bad idea," said the housekeeper, by the way of saying something.

"Hush!" said the butler; "what was that?"

"I heard nothing," said the housekeeper, faintly.

"Nothink!"

"Nothing whatever!"

"But I did."

"What was it?"

"A sound, as of a 'anful of pebbles throw'd against this here window, ma'am."

"It was nothing but the rain," said the housekeeper.

At this moment, as if to confirm her assertion, the rain which had re-commenced falling, was driven against the panes by the violence of the gusty wind.

"You were right," said the butler, with restored equanimity. "But what was I speaking of? Oh, about my plan of setting up a public house. There's one think a wantin' to the success of that hidea. Capital. How is that difficulty to be hobviated? By a partner, ma'am—by securing the co-hoperation of a partner, having similar means to myself. I declare! what a flash that was! And so late in the season, too, for lightning!"

"It is rather unusual," said the housekeeper "Are you afear'd of lightning?" inquired the butler.

"A little."

"There are few things I'm afear'd of," said the butler; "but lightning happens to be one of 'em. It comes on you so suddint like."

"But you were speaking of getting a partner, sir," said Mrs. Bell. "I should think you might easily find a man with the means to join you in the speculation."

"Ah!" said the butler, "a man won't do—it must be a lady."

"A lady?"

"Yes," cried the butler, "a lady, to share my business, my 'art and my fortune. And between you and me, Mrs. Bell, there is only one lady in the wide world with whom I could form such a partnership. Can you guess who she is?"

"I could not form the slightest idea."

"You!" cried the butler, attempting to seize the housekeeper's hand. "You, for whom I've long entertained a respectful attention, who have grown into my heart, till I feel there's no living without you—"

Here the butler suddenly stopped short, his face, from a cosy red, became deadly pale, mottled with purple; his lips, wide apart, emitted his breath in short puffs—in a word, he appeared completely paralysed and terror-stricken.

"Mrs. Bell," he gasped, at length. "You can't have lived in this family as many years as you have done, without having heard that this 'ouse was 'aunted."

"I have heard so," said the housekeeper, gravely. "They say there's a ghost that goes his rounds at night like a sentinel, and that this part of the manor-house is his special resort."

Mr. Glosser shook violently.

"It's all true," said he, as his knees knocked together.

"What is true?"

"All about the ghost. I've seen him."

"Nonsense. Where?"

"There! there! at the window, a white face. The lightning was flashing at the time, and there was the white face hovering in the air—like—like—a bat, is the likeliest thing I can think of," said the terrified butler.

He rose as he spoke, and took a candle from the table.

"I must bid you good-night, Mrs. Bell," said he. "To think of such a interruption at such a moment!"

"Stay, Mr. Glosser," said the housekeeper. "A moment since, you made me an offer of your hand."

"Yes, a bond fide offer."

"Which I respectfully but decisively decline, sir."

"I don't exactly understand you, ma'am," said the butler, his vanity getting a temporary ascendancy over his superstitious terror. "Do you mean to say that you reject my 'and and 'art and fortune?"

"I do mean to say it, sir; and that any allusion to this subject hereafter, will be construed as a personal affront."

"I hear with my ears," said the astonished butler, "but I can scarcely believe the evidences of my senses. Rejected! Very well, ma'am. I 'ave the honour to wish you a very good-night, ma'am. I 'ope you'll sleep soundly, ma'am. I 'ope you will be awake thinking of the golden opportunity you've throw'd away; yes, ma'am, for it will never occur again. You need have no apprehension—no hopes, ma'am, of my never renewing the offer; Solomon Glosser hasn't sunk so low as to hark hany many twice hever to become his bride. Ajew, ma'am, ajew! When we meet again, it will be officiously, but as far as private intercourse extends, with the calm courtesy of hallooed strangers."

Having delivered himself of this very remarkable speech, Mr. Glosser bowed in a style that would not have discredited George the Fourth, while the housekeeper sank almost to the ground in a courtesy of inimitable humility and grace. The butler then retired with a stately step, and his figure was soon lost in the depths of the dark oaken gallery he had to thread before reaching his bedroom.

Mrs. Bell waited at the door till the echoes of his footsteps had died away, and then, advancing along the same corridor for a few paces, she descended a few steps which led to a door in the lower hall that opened on the park. Unlocking this door, she peered out into the night a moment, and then clapped her hands together thrice.

"Is that you, Mrs. Bell?"

"Arthur!" replied the housekeeper.

Her hand, outstretched into the darkness, was seized by another hand, in a warm, firm, manly grasp.

"This way," said the housekeeper. "Step softly."

She led the stranger inside the mansion, closed and locked the outer door, and then conducted her mysterious visitor to her apartment.

CHAPTER II.

AN OLD FRIEND—FATHER AND SON—RECONCILIATION.

"DEAR—dear Mr. Arthur!" cried the housekeeper, after she had closed the door of her room: "and do my old eyes indeed behold you again, after ten long years?"

The person thus addressed was in the prime of manhood. He was eminently handsome. A high forehead was crowned by a mass of thick brown curls; the blue eyes were bright and soft, the features regular almost to the fault of feminine grace. Yet the idea of delicacy was banished by the bronzed hue of his complexion, and the muscularity of his strongly-knit frame. The face was quite prepossessing at first, but as you scrutinized it, there appeared a certain unsteadiness in the look, a certain feeble expression about the mouth, which indicated a lack of resolution and energy.

"You find me much changed, my good friend," said the stranger, as he dropped into a chair.

"You have grown into a man—you were a mere youth, slender and delicate, when I saw you last. You are changed for the better in many respects, certainly; but there are traces of care on your young brow, and your dress is not that which becomes the heir of Oakland Manor."

"I should hardly make a respectable figure at the Queen's Drawing-Room," said Arthur Franklyn, carelessly glancing at the coarse blue frock, grey pantaloons and hobnailed shoes which he wore. "I used to be a dandy when I was a boy, but I have long since ceased to care for fashion, or to have the means to follow it."

"Where have you been, these ten long years?" inquired the housekeeper, anxiously.

"Where have I not been? and what have I not seen?" replied Arthur Franklyn. "A sailor, a soldier, a labourer. My adventures would fill a book."

The housekeeper held up her hands.

"Poor boy! poor boy!" she murmured. "And you are drenched to the skin."

"That's nothing, I'm used to that," replied Arthur, carelessly. "But I'm hungry, my good friend."

The housekeeper instantly removed the cloth she had thrown over her tea-table. "Here is bread and butter, cold ham and cake," she said. "Heaven forbid that the heir of Oakland Manor should fast beneath the roof-tree of his fathers."

"Before I break bread, however," said Arthur, "tell me how my father is?"

"He has been poorly lately," said the housekeeper, "suffering from one of his periodical attacks of gout—but he has been easier within a day or two."

"Nothing serious has been the matter with him?"

"Oh, no!"

Arthur attacked the food set before him with an eagerness that showed how keen his appetite was.

The housekeeper surmised that he might have been fasting four-and-twenty hours.

After a period of silence, during which the young man was busily engaged in doing justice to the housekeeper's fare, he turned to her and said:

"Is it not the night of the 12th of September?"

"Yes, I have good reason to remember it."

"I had forgotten it till this moment," said Arthur.

"This night ten years ago, I left the roof of my father to become a wanderer. This night, I return to it, and an ominous storm marks the occasion. As I groped my way through the park, guided by the flashes of lightning, I searched for a tree that I had planted with my own hands. I found the spot, but it lay across my path, uprooted by the fury of the storm. Is it not a warning of coming evil to me? How long will it be before I too, cumber the earth, or lie beneath it."

"Don't speak so, Mr. Arthur, for Heaven's sake. What danger do you anticipate?"

"We are all in danger constantly. There is no life but hangs by the faintest thread. You know where the road passes over the brow of the Sybil's Cliff?"

"I remember it well. The path is narrow and the precipice four hundred feet in depth."

"Yes, and at its base the North Sea howls among the jagged rocks like a tiger howling for his prey. To-night the rocks were hidden, for the tide is a very high one, but the sea dashed heavily against the cliff as if it sought to undermine it. As I was passing that point of peril, a sudden gust nearly swept me from my feet. Had I not caught at random the limb of a stunted tree that grew upon the very verge of the cliff, the North Sea would have been the sepulchre of Arthur Franklyn."

"You were always venturesome, Mr. Arthur," said the housekeeper.

"I have long since ceased to be so," replied Franklyn. "I have grave reasons for taking better care than I used to of myself—to say nothing of my being now thirty years of age. Once danger alone commended an enterprise, to me, now the end must be apparent before I can close my eyes to the peril."

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"You were always venturesome, Mr. Arthur," said the housekeeper.

He spoke with gravity and deliberation. He was indeed changed, from the fiery and impulsive youth who had left Oakland Manor House ten years before.

"And now, Mrs. Bell," he resumed, after an interval of silence, "I am here to-night, to do what requires more nerve than to face a battery or to encounter a storm at sea. I am here to see my father—to look once more upon that honoured face."

The housekeeper's pale face looked paler than usual.

"You have never written to him during your long absence?" she asked, earnestly.

"Never."

"And have never heard from him?"

"Not a line. Has he never spoken of me?"

"He has not only never spoken of you—but he issued orders to the household, through me, that your name should never be mentioned in his presence. You were, he said, as one dead to him, and he wished you so to remain."

"That augurs ill of the result of my interview."

"You chose a singular time for your visit, I must say, Mr. Arthur," said the housekeeper.

"I had my reasons for it. If he should prove inexorable, I did not wish to be driven from my ancestral home before witnesses—rather let it be in the dead of night, with none to see my agony or his indignation."

The housekeeper made no reply. She was evidently reflecting. The silence was broken by Arthur Franklin.

"Does my father still keep up his old custom of sleeping with his door unlocked?"

"He does."

"And with a lamp burning in his apartment?"

"He has never changed that or any other habit. Sir George is what we call a very set man."

"That is all I wanted to ask, Mrs. Bell. I can find my way to his room without a guide or light."

"Be careful not to awake him suddenly. Who knows what the consequences might be?"

"I shall be careful, you may depend upon it," replied Arthur.

He rose and left the room, closing the door softly. With a beating heart he trod the well-remembered gallery, and passed the many windows all unchanged during the long ten years of his absence. How strangely this fixity of an old home appears to the wanderer who has passed a long interval crowded with vicissitudes of travel and adventure!

At last he reached the old oaken door which opened on Sir George's room. His heart beat fast, the blood rushed to his head, he felt sick, dizzy and dismayed, as he laid his hand upon the lock. But his courage soon returned; he opened the door, and moving softly over the thick carpet which returned no echo to his footsteps, he stood within the room. His eye took in none of the old familiar objects that surrounded him; he saw not the tapestry hangings, the heavy oaken chairs, with their velvet linings and armorial carvings, the old ancestral portraits, that frowned along the walls like phantoms, and seemed to follow the intruder with a searching gaze, nor the heavy, parted curtains and deep valence of the bed—he saw only the form of the sleeper, the face upturned from the pillow, in the tranquillity and the stillness of death.

Death, was it death, rather than a slumber so profound as to counterfeit its sterner brother? This thought scattered to the winds all the little projects he had formed for making himself gradually known. A wild cry burst from his lips as he flung himself upon his knees beside the bed, and grasped the hand that lay upon the coverlet in both of his.

The sleeper instantly awoke—passing from the deepest slumber to the broadest wakefulness. A man of iron nerve, Sir George Franklin might have boasted, if he ever boasted, that he had never, in his whole life, known the sensation of fear. If he had seen, instead of the kneeling suppliant, sorrow-stricken figure by his bedside, an armed assassin, his presence of mind would not for a moment have deserted him. He would have snatched the weapon that always lay where his hands could grasp it, and stricken the invader of his privacy. A single glance sufficed to show that his position was not one of peril. The next glance awakened curiosity—for recognition was not instantaneous. He gazed indeed for some moments at the handsome, agitated face beside him, before the changes it had undergone had passed away like mist from the mirror of his memory, leaving that fair image which, once impressed, no time nor trouble could obliterate. While this mental process was going on, the features of the baronet betrayed no sign of passion—neither anger nor love knitted his brow or wreathed his lip with smiles. He was as impassive as a marble statue. He did not even withdraw the hand which Arthur Franklin covered with tears and kisses. This silence and immobility became at last intolerable.

"Oh, father!" cried young Franklin. "Don't you know me? Can't you speak to me? Haven't you

forgiven me yet? Am I still and for ever to be a stranger to you—as you have said—as one dead?"

The chest of the baronet heaved—his lips parted—but no sound, only a deep expiration of breath issued from them. He withdrew his hand, but it was only that he might open his arms and fold his son to his heart.

"Forgotten you!" he cried—"Arthur, you have never been absent from my thoughts a day—an hour. You know not what a father's heart is. I thought that pride had steeled mine to adamant; and it was only through long and cruel experience, that I learned that nature cannot be crushed. I know not where you have been—what you have done—but in advance I forgive you everything. I drove you from my doors, because you refused to embrace the profession I had marked out for you—because you claimed to be the arbiter of your own destiny. I receive you again without a question."

"Even if I came back with another?"

"Are you married?"

"Yes."

"Have you children?"

"One."

"But you are miserably clad, poor boy. You have married beneath your rank and expectations."

"What expectations had I when I was an outcast? I had ceased to be the heir of Oakland Manor. I married poverty and beauty; but united with grace and goodness that would grace a palace. You shall see her—you shall judge for yourself, father. Privation and toil have dimmed the girlish loveliness that won my admiration, but the heart, the soul, that claimed and claim my truest love, remain unchanged."

"You shall send for your wife and child to-morrow."

"Send for them, father! I must rejoin them ere morning—a long and weary tramp."

"You shall go in my carriage."

"Not so, by your leave, sir, I will go as I came. Not until you see my wife and child—not until you hear my whole story without reservation and equivocation, and that aided by the lips I love best, will I assume any privileges accorded by your generosity, or renounce the feigned name under which I have done battle with the world for ten long weary years."

"You are here, Arthur," said the baronet, "not only in my presence, but in the presence of the art-shadows of a long generation of distinguished ancestors. Can you look at these old pictures—can you look upon me, and say, that you have never dishonoured the unsullied name we bear—that the escutcheon which has descended to us without a stain, has been untarnished by any act of yours?"

"I can say so, father, before high Heaven. I have toiled for bread on sea and land—I have cast my lot with the lowly—I have striven with the wretched for existence, but I have shrunk from crime with the shuddering repugnance of a nature derived from yourself."

"I ask no other declaration, no other pledge, Arthur," said the baronet, again folding him to his heart. "And now go, my son, since go you must—and cheer your beloved ones with the assurance that their trials are over. Tell your wife that a father waits impatiently to welcome a daughter—and that her home henceforth is Oakland Manor House, to which you are the rightful heir; and add that you never were disinherited."

Arthur attempted to reply—but sobs choked his utterance. He could only press the manly hand extended to him and cover it with kisses.

"And now," he said, at length, "I must tear myself away."

"You must have had a friend in the garrison, to have gained admission at this house?" said the baronet, with a smile.

"I had—a staunch and true one—Mrs. Bell," replied young Franklin.

"God bless her!" said the baronet. "She did her duty in opening the doors of Oakland Manor House to him who will one day be its master."

Arthur lingered yet; but at last he tore himself away, and hastened from the room.

At the end of the gallery which he lately traversed with such uncertain steps, he met the housekeeper. The poor woman had passed the interval, which seemed to her an age, in praying and weeping. She caught his hand and scrutinized his face with anxiety.

"You have seen your father!" she exclaimed.

"Yes—and you, my dear old friend, are entitled to the first news of the result; which, however, must be a secret for a little while longer. He received me with open arms."

"Now the Lord be praised for his mercy!" cried the good woman. "And you will come back to live with us again?"

"God willing," said Arthur. "In his hand are our destinies."

He spoke solemnly and reverently; then, pressing his lips to the withered cheek of the housekeeper, whom, in earlier years, he had regarded almost as a mother, he bade her a tender adieu.

A moment later, and he was gone. With senses intensified by affection, Mrs. Bell caught the sound of his footsteps as they receded on the gravel path, till she knew that he had passed the confines of the park. The moon at that moment broke forth from a bank of leaden clouds, and poured its full effulgence on the broad landscape. It was but a moment of brightness, however, for again the heavy vapours veiled the silver face of the luminary; fit emblem of the vicissitudes of human life—a moment of felicity followed by a cloud of affliction.

CHAPTER III.

SIR RASHLEIGH BRANDON, AND WHAT HE DID AT THE SYBIL'S CLIFF.

In another apartment of the old manor-house sat another of its inmates, who will figure largely in the progress of our narrative; Sir Rashleigh Brandon, who has already been alluded to. He was a nephew of Sir George Franklin, who had, from the first days of his orphanage, received from the baronet all the affection and care that a father bestows upon a child. Yet, as a child, Sir Rashleigh had none of those winning ways so usual and so becoming to the opening years of life. He was grave, thoughtful, and reserved. To dissipate the loneliness of the isolated manor-house, Sir George frequently sent for the children of his friends in the country; but, though Arthur always enjoyed these gatherings, they appeared to afford little satisfaction to Sir Rashleigh. As he grew older, his gravity deepened, and his love of solitude became intensified. He read and studied hard, and soon advanced far beyond the depth of the masters whom Sir George engaged to educate the cousins. A magnificent library, the accumulated mental wealth of ages, was in time exhausted by the curious student, and then books and scientific instruments were regularly forwarded from London to minister to his craving after knowledge.

Yet Sir Rashleigh was no mere bookworm. He excelled in athletic exercises—was an adroit swordsman, a tireless walker, a bold and strong swimmer, a powerful and supple boxer, a dead shot, and a perfect horseman. Yet he never liked association in these out-door sports. For a few times, in deference to his uncle's wishes, he donned the scarlet coat and rode after the country hounds, leading the field and being first in at the death, but he preferred to gallop his horse along the cliffs alone, indifferent to observation and applause. An eminently handsome man, he might have been popular with the ladies; but he seemed to shun, rather than court their society, though, when forced to appear in company, no one bore himself with a more chivalric grace. He was very assiduous in the performance of his religious duties, and always represented his family in the baronet's pew in the little church of Claremont.

Still, though no one ever spoke ill of him, or could allege anything against him, he was not generally liked. The poorest cottager preferred a kind word from Arthur to a sovereign from Sir Rashleigh. No one could call him overbearing, for he had a salutation for the lowest peasant, and he was even distinguished by his air of humility, yet, few, if any, felt at ease in his presence. He was an enigma.

It was this man who now sat in his room with an unread folio lying open before him on his table. The full-length Venetian mirror that hung opposite to him had never reflected a face more regularly beautiful, or a figure of more graceful and manly proportions. A high pale forehead was shaded by raven curls; the eyes were keen as a hawk's, and of a dark hazel; the nose straight, the lips and chin finely cut and moulded. His limbs displayed the union of symmetry and strength, and his attitudes were all stamped with the grace inseparable from a perfect organization and a state of complete health.

The eyes of Sir Rashleigh Brandon glanced at his image in the mirror, and a sentiment of pride lighted up his face. He never smiled; but his expression brightened or darkened, according to his humour.

"I must believe it," so ran the current of his thoughts—"I must believe that my mirror tells no flattering tale. I might, if I chose, make a certain progress, by those outward graces which are the sole gifts of some of my fellows—marry some dowager, perhaps, and so at once step into a fortune. But I will be indebted to no woman for success—nor will I forego youth and beauty in a partner. But I have that within that passeth show! I feel the fire of genius—I know that I possess vast stores of knowledge, and that gift of eloquence which makes many the bond-slaves of the few. Why, then, can I not assume the place that belongs to me—spring to the vantage-ground and assert myself in the plenitude of my gifts and power? Because I lack gold—the talisman which

opens every door, the key to the temple of Fame and Power. I worship gold as no miser ever worshipped it—not as the end, but as the means. Had I the wealth of this old man, my career would be open, there is nothing to which I might not aspire. Fortune has thus far favoured me. The heir of Oakland is an outcast—and the baronet, childless by his own act, has treated me as a son. His wealth will doubtless be mine; ay, but when? That is the momentous question. Will it come to me when age has changed these raven locks to silver, and dimmed the lustre of these eyes, and destroyed the zest with which I now could enjoy rank, beauty, luxury, power? Must I wait till I am palsied before I grasp the guerdon that I covet? Sir George has had some severe attacks of late, but there is a vitality in the system which sometimes drives one to despair. Why should a man without a spark of ambition, without much enjoyment of life, with the burden of years accumulating on his shoulders stand in the way of him whose aspirations vault far above this wretched, circumscribed sphere, who could reap a rich harvest of the joys of life, who has five senses craving gratification, and the fires of youth burning like Hecla beneath an exterior of snow and ice?

At this moment of his self-communing, Sir Rashleigh was interrupted by a cry from the apartment of Sir George, which adjoined his own. The impulse of a generous nature would have been to fly to the assistance of a friend in distress, but Sir Rashleigh adopted a very different and a very singular course. He rose—first having shaded his study lamp—and approaching the wall softly, pressed a spring, upon which a panel of the oaken wainscoting flew back, disclosing a small recess, in which stood a pair of study-steps. Ascending these, he applied his eyes to two small apertures which corresponded to the eyes of one of the life-sized portraits which hung in the baronet's apartment. From this position he could see whatever was going on in the bedroom, and he could also hear every whisper uttered within its limits.

The old adage, that "listeners hear no good of themselves," was not belied in this instance; for though the name of Sir Rashleigh was never once uttered by father or son, yet all that fell upon his ear convinced him that his soaring hopes, his long-cherished schemes, had been rudely prostrated and annihilated. Arthur had never been an outcast from his father's heart; Arthur had never been disinherited; Arthur was to enjoy that wealth which he himself had so coveted, had so schemed for, lived for, through so many weary years!

Nothing brighter appeared in Sir Rashleigh's future than the generosity of his uncle and cousin, and that, measured by the most liberal standard, would fall far short of what his plans required. How bitterly he cursed himself for not having read the character of his uncle better—for not having placed a juster estimate on the feeling of a father. Deeming it a work of supererogation, he had never fortified himself against this contingency. He might have erected such a barrier of calumny, and falsehood, and presumptive evidence, as to have presented an insurmountable obstacle to the return of the heir to his father's house and heart. Now, too late, he saw what he might have done; and this unprincipled man reproached himself bitterly for sins uncommitted, as repentant sinners reproach themselves for crimes which they have fully consummated.

But was it even now too late? He had never recognized these fatal words, "too late." He had always prided himself on his power to wrench circumstances from their bias and make them subservient to his purposes. He had always taught himself that nothing could resist the might of him who wills. As these thoughts rushed wildly through his brain, his brow darkened to more than his habitual gloom, and had any one then looked him in the face, he would have shrunk back from its iron sternness and pitiless inflexibility. He stepped down from the place where he had been standing, slipped back the panel of the wainscot, threw a cloak over his shoulders, and extinguished his lamp. He then opened his door, and passing into the corridor, looked it behind him. Next, with a swift and noiseless step he descended the staircase nearest to his room, and through the lower hall gained a door that opened on the park. This he unlocked, and having left the house, concealed himself amidst a clump of shrubbery, his eyes intently fixed upon the western side of the huge old pile that loomed up in the gloomy night. Presently a door opened, and Arthur Franklin stepped lightly forth. He came so near Sir Rashleigh, at a moment when the moon broke forth, that he involuntarily shrank back as if uncertain of the security of his concealment. But Arthur moved on unconcernedly, and scaled the stockade fence and continued his course. Favoured by the darkness, which had again set in, Sir Rashleigh, letting himself out by a gate of which he possessed a key, followed swiftly in the direction of the receding footsteps of the heir of Oakland, but taking care to keep close to the hedgerow, so that, should the moon again suddenly

burst forth, he would be sure to be in the shadow, as well as to keep the grass under his feet to prevent the sound of his steps being heard. He continued in pursuit in this way for a few moments, until Arthur had struck into a narrow track or bridle-path that ran along the cliffs in the direction of the village of Claremont. Then the pursuer suddenly diverged from the beaten path and struck into a hollow way, densely shaded by a thick growth of shrubbery, and forming a chord to the arc of the circle which Arthur was traversing.

The latter, wholly unconscious of being followed, moved gaily along, now silent in the joy of his heart, and anon humming some favourite air to time his elastic steps. The tide, swelled by the strong easterly wind which had blown almost a gale for several days, thundered against the bases of the cliff, but its wrathful clamour fell unheeded on his ears. The gusts roared and rattled among the branches of the stunted pines and oaks that struggled for existence on the verge of the precipice, but he did not pause to note their violence. His thoughts were far away with the loved ones to whom he was hastening with glad tidings of coming joy.

At last he stood upon the brow of the Sybil's Cliff, where the narrowness and ruggedness of the path and the fury of the wind compelled him to take heed to his steps. Here he paused for a moment. Though the moon was still obscured by clouds, there was light enough to see the expanse of the "old, gray wrinkled sea," and the lines of seething foam that marked the repeated charges of the surf upon the line of rocks that bade defiance to all the fierce assaults of the wild German ocean.

At this point he found himself suddenly seized round the body. A man had leaped from the bushes on the windward side of the path, and before he could stir, even while yet entirely unconscious of danger, had pinioned his arms to his body in an herculean grasp. Arthur was strong, active and brave; and, though startled for a moment, instantly recovered his self-possession and put forth all his strength to free himself from the coil of his assailant. But the latter had seized the advantage and maintained it. In spite of his antagonist's furious writhings, the aggressor held his own.

"Could I but free an arm," was Arthur's thought, "I could soon protect myself;" but he was in the hands of one more powerful than himself, and after a long and protracted struggle, he found his muscles, weakened by long privation and by recent great exertion, failing him in his hour of need.

Then it was, as the unknown assailant began to press him towards the edge of the precipice, the idea for the first time, flashed upon him, that the object of the attack was not robbery, but assassination. Then it was, that the thought of his loved ones forced from his lips a plea for mercy.

There was no reply to this appeal, but inch by inch, foot by foot, the assassin forced his victim nearer and nearer to the fatal edge of the cliff.

(To be continued.)

DETECTING A MURDERER.

THE following story was related by a person who had served a number of years as a secret detective agent of the Government:

"I was travelling through one of the northern counties," said the narrator, "when, on stopping one day at the inn of a small village, I found the citizens of the place in a state of great excitement over a strange murder which had just come to light. In a corn-field, about half-a-mile from the village, and just off from a small by-road, a young girl, apparently about sixteen or seventeen years of age, had been found dead and decaying, with such marks of violence upon her person as left no doubt that she had been dealt with in the most revolting and fiendish manner. What made the matter more strange and wonderful was the fact that the deceased was entirely unknown to everybody in that region. She was quite respectably dressed, and though her face, when discovered, was somewhat black and a good deal swelled, yet there were such traces of lineament as led many who saw the corpse to believe she had been very handsome and attractive. There was nothing about her to give a clue to her identity or the place from whence she came; but in the pocket of her dress was found a letter, without superscription; in her clenched hand was the button of a man's coat, with a small piece of cloth adhering to it, evidently torn out in her death-struggle with her murderer; and from the ground beside her was picked up a small key, apparently belonging to a portmanteau. These three articles were all that could be discovered calculated to give any clue to the mystery whatever; and when I state that the letter was without date or signature, and was

mainly designed to bring about a meeting at the 'usual place,' wherever that might be, it will readily be seen how slight was the chance of proving the identity of the deceased and detecting the assassin.

"The body of the murdered girl had been brought to the tavern immediately after its discovery, and at the time of my arrival, the coroner and his jury were in the act of holding an inquest, which, as might be supposed, simply resulted in a verdict of death from strangling and other violent means, at the hands of some person or persons unknown.

"The mysterious affair, however, created an intense excitement throughout the place; and before night, the town authorities, assisted by liberal subscriptions on the part of several wealthy citizens, made the public offer of one hundred pounds' reward for the apprehension and conviction of the murderers of the unknown girl.

"This case, so unusual and mysterious—so out of the usual range of even mysterious murders—particularly interested me; and making myself known to the proper officials, and showing them my authority as a secret agent of the government, I offered my services to investigate the matter, which were cordially accepted.

"One of my first acts was to visit the spot where the murder had been committed, to see if there were any traces of more than one person having been engaged in it, and also if possible to find what course he had taken on leaving the field. Fortunately no rain had fallen for the last week or ten days, and the foot-prints of both parties were visible from the place where they had got over the fence into the corn-field, which was distant some eight or ten rods from the scene of murder. At the latter spot there had been a considerable struggle, as could easily be traced by unmistakable marks on the soft ground, notwithstanding several other persons had been there since, including the merely curious as well as those who had removed the body. One thing, however, was certain. Only two persons had walked to this spot along the trail leading from the fence, as already mentioned; and as the foot-prints of one these were clearly those of the deceased, it followed, as a matter of course, that the paralysed steps were those of her assassin.

"I now felt the importance of examining the foot-prints of the murderer, carefully and minutely, in order to form some correct idea of the man himself: for that the companion of the girl was a man was clearly proved by the button in her dead grasp, and by other evidences of a nature that I need not name. It was the fashion at that time for gentlemen, especially in the principal cities, to have boots with high heels, small at the top, protected against wear by an iron rim on the outer edge, and the prints of just such a heel were there. This fact, taken in connection with the fine texture of black cloth which had been detached with the button, satisfied me that the assassin was from some large town or city, and was well and, perhaps, fashionably dressed. I measured the length of the feet, and, granting him well-proportioned, this indicated a stature of about five feet eight inches; and from the width of the foot, and indentation made in walking, I judged his weight not far from one hundred and thirty pounds. The chiropography of the note denoted a hand accustomed to a pen in a commercial or business way, with a certain individual nervousness, which showed, in some degree, the temperament of the writer; while the portmanteau key, which was old and worn, I fancied bespoke a man who spent a portion of his time in travelling.

"In cases of mere conjecture, I have often been correctly guided by a remarkable power of intuition, answering to the instinct of the animal, but which I cannot explain or account for on any known hypothesis; and bringing this peculiar faculty to bear upon the subject that now occupied my attention, I summed up in this wise: that the murderer was about five feet eight inches in height, of medium proportions, good figure, fashionably dressed, of pleasing manners, with a dark complexion, a keen, scrutinizing countenance, and a dark, restless eye. Of course this was all, or nearly all, conjecture; but such was the picture that fancy drew—such the figure that presented itself before my mind's eye.

"Next in order was to divine, if possible whence, he had come and whither he had gone. It was not at all likely that the two had come hither on foot; if not, a vehicle of some kind had most probably been used; and that, if not procured in this region, had undoubtedly stopped somewhere within a few miles (besides the halt near the fence where the field had been entered), and might perhaps be readily traced. As the foot-prints showed that the murderer had recrossed the fence at the point nearest his deed of crime, I looked in the by-road for some evidence of a vehicle having been in waiting there, and found such traces as satisfied me that the latter had been there, that the horse had been tied to a tree in the vicinity, and that it had come from the south and gone to the north.

"With this supposed clue to the first direction taken

by the villain after the murder, I went back to the village and made my preparations to follow him.

"I do not propose to enter into a detail of all I said and did. Let it suffice, that, a little after dark, I had reached a village six miles north of the one where the inquest had been held, and where there was a railway station. I put up at the principal inn of the place, and made my first inquiries of the landlord. Had any stranger, travelling in a buggy or other vehicle, stopped with him within the last week or so? Certainly, several had. Had his attention been drawn to any one of them by any suspicious appearance or circumstance? He could not say that he remembered anything out of the usual way of travellers, all of whom, of course, had some peculiarities.

"But why do you ask?" he inquired.

"I am an officer, in pursuit of a murderer," I replied; and I went on to tell him all about the horrible affair, adding my own conjectures and suspicions.

"Ha!" cried the host, with a start, "I wonder if that was the man that hired a horse and buggy of me about four days ago, to go a distance down the country. He came out from L— by train, he said, and wanted to make a short visit to a friend; but when I asked him where his friend lived, he didn't exactly know, as he had never been to see him, and in fact his friend had only been a short time in these parts himself. I didn't altogether like his looks, and I hesitated about letting him have the vehicle, till he told me he had his sister with him, who was going to remain a few weeks, but that he himself must get back to the city the next day. He got the horse about two o'clock in the afternoon, and fetched him back between eight and nine the same evening."

"That is the man, for a hundred pounds!" cried I. "Describe him!"

"The host did so, and his description so nearly agreed with my preconception of the villain—in dress, size, height, and general appearance—that I was almost startled at the reflection that I had arrived at so much truth by a means so mysterious to myself. The inn-keeper had not seen the girl at all.

"Having gathered all the information I could from the landlord, my next inquiry was concerning the guard of the train from the city on that day. Luckily the same train was in that night, and the guard resided in the place. I went to his house and found him at home. He could not throw any additional light on the subject. He thought it quite probable there might have been such a man and girl in his train on that day; in fact, now he came to think of it, he was almost sure that two such persons got out at that station—but that was all he knew.

The very next down-train carried me into L—. I procured all the daily papers, and carefully looked them through. In one I found a Mary Barton, a girl of seventeen, advertised as having left her home on an errand, and not having since been heard of by her afflicted mother, whose residence was given. There was a description of the girl, and an earnest prayer for information concerning her. I knew she was the murdered girl, and I went straight to her mother's house. She was a poor widow, living in a court, and her darling child, she said, was all she had left to make life desirable. Alas! not even her now; but I had not the heart to tell her so. I informed her that I was an officer, and that I had reason to believe her daughter had gone off with a man whose description I gave, and asked her if she had any knowledge of such a person. At first she said she had not; but after thinking awhile, she added, that the description reminded her of a clerk in a certain commercial house, whom she had once seen speaking to her daughter. I felt that the man she alluded to was the one I wanted, and as soon as I could decently get away from her, who was in sore affliction and put a hundred anxious questions, I hastened to the house she named, and, on pretence of wishing to purchase some goods, went in, and saw, as I believed, the murderer before me.

"After looking at different samples of goods, I said I would soon return, and then hastened to a magistrate's office, got out a warrant, and saw it in the hands of the proper officer. I then told the latter I would precede him, and have a little conversation with the clerk, and that I would give him a signal as soon as ready.

"By-the-by," said I to the clerk, on returning to the warehouse, looking keenly at him while I spoke, "it seems to me I have seen you before. Do you not sometimes travel for this firm?"

"Oh, yes, occasionally," he replied.

"Now I think of it," I went on, "I believe I have seen you recently. Ah, yes! you stopped at the village of —, with your sister, on your way to a friend's house in the country. Yes, I remember."

"My eye was fixed keenly upon him as I spoke, and he flushed deeply red and then turned deadly pale.

"Let me see," I continued; "your sister's name was—Mary Barton—and—she died—she was murdered in a corn-field?"

"He gasped, staggered, uttered a wild shriek, and then with one bound left me, and ran swiftly towards the other end of the building."

"Stop him! he is a murderer!" I shouted, bounding after him.

"Before I could catch him, or any one else comprehend what was taking place, there was a sharp report, and the man fell dead. He had drawn a small pocket-pistol, and fired the charge into his brain through the right temple. He left a wife and two small children to mourn his loss.

"Why he took Mary Barton away from the city and murdered her as he did will probably remain a mystery through all time. To save the feelings of the innocent living, the two dreadful tragedies were hushed up as much as possible, and were never very generally known."

"I returned to the place of murder, and made my report to the authorities. I had done my duty, and hunted the villain down. They would have given me half the reward, but I declined to take anything beyond a reasonable amount for my time and expenses. With this I resumed my journey, satisfied with the extraordinary accomplishment of my design."

B.

SCIENCE.

CURIOSITY OF THE VISION.—It has been found, while firing at the running-ma target at Wimbledon, which is scarlet on one side and grey on the other, that the scarlet dazzles the eye, and is hence the most difficult to hit, from leaving a red streak behind it, which unsettles the aim. The grey side was struck 74 times, and the red only 42 times. It is a curious fact, too, that men with grey eyes shoot better than those with eyes of other colours.

PALMER AND M'INTYRE'S METHOD OF APPLYING METAL SHEATHING TO IRON SHIPS, &c.—This invention, by Mr. C. M. Palmer and T. M'Intyre, of Jarro, shipbuilders, has for its object the application and fastening of copper, "Muntz metal," zinc, or other metal used for the purposes of sheathing, to the bottoms of iron ships or vessels, and also to the iron used for other purposes, such as caissons, fortifications, or graving docks, in which it is liable to fouling by exposure to sea-water or from other causes; and this invention consists in fixing to the iron plates of the ship or vessel, or to iron for other similar uses, strips of metal, by preference of galvanized iron, in which strips are inserted rivets of copper or other soft metal, such rivets protruding from the strips in such a manner as to admit of sheets of copper, "Muntz metal," zinc, or other sheathing, previously punched, being applied thereto and held thereby as required. By this arrangement the strips fixed to the vessel form carriers for the sheathing, and obviate the necessity of perforating through the ship's side. The strips are double—that is to say, there is one outer and one inner strip, and they are applied to the plates of the vessel by means of screws or rivets passing through both strips, and into the plates, the copper rivets having been previously inserted in an opposite direction in the outer strip. The sheets of copper or other sheathing are put on to the projecting copper rivets with their edges overlapping, so that the ends of two sheets are held by one row of rivets, and tarred felt, "blair," or other similar non-conducting material is inserted between the iron plates of the vessel and the copper or other metal sheathing. The projecting portions of copper are then hammered so as to securely rivet them.

THE FAR EAST.—The launch of this vessel took place from Messrs. Dudgeon's building-yard, at Cubitt's-town, Millwall. The Far East is the first vessel of her class to which the double or twin-screw system has been applied. Her principal dimensions are as follows:—Length between perpendiculars, 227 ft.; length of keel, 210 ft.; breadth of beam, 34 ft.; depth moulded, 22 ft.; depth of hold, 20 ft 6 in.; depth at load water line, 17 ft.; displacement of hull, 2,200 tons; builders' measurement of tonnage, 1,270 tons. On her upper deck she has a capacious poop and fore-castle, and the usual house and cabins amidships. She is fitted with engines of 150 horse power nominal, which drive a two-bladed lifting screw under each quarter. The engines have combined cylinders, the diameter of the high-pressure cylinder being 24 in., and of the expansive cylinder 50 in., with a stroke of piston of 2 ft. The screws have each a diameter of 8 ft. 2 in., and a pitch of 16 ft. The two boilers have each six furnaces, with 109 square feet of firebar surface, and a tube surface of 1,883 ft. The shafting of the screw projects through a wrought-iron tube of great strength, which is bolted on to a false iron bulkhead, clear altogether of the ship's frame. This tube at its outer end is connected with a massive wrought-iron slide, which guides the screw to the well when being lifted, or to the shafting when being lowered. The ordinary "cheese-coupling" by which

the screw is connected with the shafting is superseded in the Far East's shaft by a square head at the end, which fits into a corresponding recess in the beam of the screw, which is connected by a thrust block fixed on a sliding rest. The screws are lifted by a worm and barrel: the whole arrangement for lifting the screws into their wells on each quarter looks perfectly efficient, and, at the same time, of that simplicity which is of itself the best recommendation of all similar mechanical arrangements. The launch was perfectly successful.

A SINGULAR DISCOVERY LATELY ANNOUNCED IN FRANCE.—The discovery is that of a Dutchman, M. Hooibrenk, and the results of his researches have been so well-marked and valuable that he has been awarded the Cross of the Legion of Honour by the Emperor, who has directed that a scientific commission be appointed to investigate and report upon the matter. M. Hooibrenk supposes that the number of grains in an ear of corn can be increased by bringing a larger quantity of pollen into contact with the stigmata than they usually receive. He conducts his experiments as follows:—He takes a cord of from 20 to 30 yards long, and fastens it to a stiff woollen fringe of about 10 inches long; he steepes it for a short time in honey, and drags it over the fields of corn two or three times after flowering. It catches the pollen from the anthers and applies it to the stigmata (it is, in fact, Mr. Darwin's bee process on a gigantic scale), and the result is a greatly increased crop. This method has been tried in conjunction with the old one, on a farm near Epernay, in Champagne, the property of the celebrated wine-dealers, Messrs. Jacqueson. The results beneath show the relative advantages of both systems:—Hooibrenk's system—wheat 31 kilos, rye 25½ kilos, barley 24 kilos, oats 17 kilos. Old system—wheat 21 kilos, rye 16 kilos, barley 16 kilos, oats 12 kilos. It has been conjectured that the results would have been still more striking had not this season been such a favourable one. Fruit and garden vegetables have been similarly treated, and with a like success. It has been found also that an inclination of 112 degs. of the branches of the vine produces some effect upon the flow of the sap, and increases the fruit crop. M. Hooibrenk maintains that by his process, and without any material additional outlay, crops of fruit, vegetables, and corn, can be increased in value 50 per cent.

SHAN O'NEIL.—Grown insolent with prosperity, Shan had been dealing too presumptuously with the Scots; his countess, though compelled to live with him, and to be the mother of his children, had felt his brutality, repented of her folly, and perhaps attempted to escape. In the daytime, when he was abroad marauding, she was coupled like a hound to a page or a horse-boy, and only released at night when he returned to his evening orgies.—*History of England, from the Fall of Wolsey to the Death of Elizabeth.* By James Anthony Froude, M.A.

CURIOUS EFFECTS OF LIGHTNING.—An esteemed correspondent has just written to Mr. John Robertson, as follows:—"During a visit in Essex, we drove, on the 14th of October last, to see the fine old church of Lavenham, a decayed clothing town in Suffolk; and met with a somewhat curious instance of the effect of lightning, which would, I think, have interested you. The Guildhall, a quaint old timber building, very richly carved, now in a crazy state, and inhabited by poor people, was struck, and a round hole cut through roof, ceilings, and down to the ground, where it stunned an old washerwoman, and completely unhooped one of her tabs. The old lady and her husband tell their story in a very quaint fashion, and seem proud of the old lady's misadventure."

MUSICAL GLASSES.—When a clean wet finger is passed round the brim of a goblet, a pleasing vibration is produced, and the sound is purer, more musical, than when the glass is struck. This fact has led to the construction of a cheap musical instrument, upon which those who have an ear for music may easily play simple airs, and thus amuse themselves and their friends. Any air can be played in the compass of an octave; thus eight goblets will make a set, or, better still, twelve will extend to an octave and a half. The best form of goblet is the bell-shape, uncut, and having a foot. The goblets must vary in size; the large ones forming the bass notes, the smaller the treble. If the tones of the glasses are required to be very correct, they must be selected and compared with the notes of musical strings, minute variations being readily corrected by placing more or less water in each goblet. Thus tuned, make a mark to where the water reaches, in order to save the trouble of future tuning. Now, fix the glasses about an inch apart in an oblong tray, and they are complete to perform upon. Clean the hands from grease with soap and pumice-stone, so that the fingers may be more sensitive to touch. Wet them frequently, and draw them over the glasses according to the sound or musical

note required, and by passing them rapidly from brim to brim, harmony is readily produced. Though such instruments are now rarely seen, we may infer from what Goldsmith says in the "Vicar of Wakefield," that they were in use a century ago. "They talk," says Goldsmith, "of nothing but high life and other fashionable topics, such as pictures, taste, Shakespeare, and the musical glasses."

FACETIE.

MR. SPURLOCK has had to remonstrate with the young ladies of his chapel for fainting away so often.

THE PROPOSED PANACEA.—If a European Congress can preserve peace, that is more than an American one has been able to do.—*Punch*.

A VERY pompous Englishman, who has a good deal of money, lately said to an ex-ambassador, "H—, I want a good investment. What do you do with your money?" "Why," replied his excellency, "I bought an umbrella with the last I had."

MOST FULLY ACCOUNTED FOR.—The reason, no doubt, why people don't like to sit down thirteen to dinner is because, under those circumstances, they must necessarily be "at sixes and sevens with each other."—*Fun*.

HIGHLY COMPLIMENTARY.—A gentleman—it might have been the writer of this paragraph—felt very uncomfortable a week or so ago, when, on going to sit for his photograph, he was asked by the artist, who was by no means "happy" in the pronunciation of some of his words, whether he wished to have his "fool-face" taken.—*Fun*.

IMPORTANT NEWS FROM AMERICA.—The collecting of old postage-stamps has become such a mania in the Northern States of America, that the supply of the genuine article is insufficient to meet the demand. The Government has, therefore, decided on a further issue of an immense quantity of Greenbacks, which, it is expected, will answer nearly the same purpose in the end.—*Punch*.

MR. SOTHERN was having his hair dressed at Bath, previously to his appearance at the theatre, when the operator, who did not know his customer, spoke in enthusiastic terms of the actor's talent, but added, "He is a great scamp, a great scamp, sir. He ran away from home, ruined his parents by his extravagance, turned his family out of doors, and brought his father's grey hairs with sorrow to the grave."

A LITTLE STATESMAN.—Lord John Russell was a much bigger man than Earl Russell has proved to be. The former could boast of a few bright achievements—the latter has only blunders to show. Throughout the whole of the American crisis, the Foreign Secretary's policy has been a weak combination of petty craft and ostentatious cowardice. The result is, that the Americans have some reason for crowing over us, and declaring that we seize the rams rather in deference to their wishes than from any belief that their building is illegal. Really, the Government is very much to be pitied with a giddy young Lovelace for a premier, a nervous little nobleman at foreign affairs, and a pugnacious roysterer as secretary for Ireland. What can poor dear Gladstone think of all these goings-on?—*Fun*.

HOW HE LOST A CUSTOMER.

A few days since a well-dressed lady entered the shop of a London tradesman, who, among other proprietary articles, is the inventor of a celebrated hair tonic.

As she entered, the shopkeeper was behind the counter, a matter rather rare for him, and with his hat on his head. He personally waited on her, asking, with his best smile, "What can I show you ma'am?"

"Your hair tonic."

"Here it is, ma'am"—producing a bottle of the article.

"This is what makes hair grow, does it?"

"Yes, ma'am; you'll find a little pamphlet inside the wrapper with many certificates from people who have been bald."

"Humph. What's the price?"

"Six shillings a bottle ma'am—six bottles for thirty shillings."

"You're certain it'll make hair grow?"

"It never fails unless the hair is destroyed by disease."

"Well, I've lost a little of my hair, I will try it."

Proprietor said he had no doubt the tonic would accomplish the result, and the lady ordered a half-dozen to be sent her house. Proprietor took the address. As the lady turned to leave the shop, proprietor removed his hat, showing a head whose crown was innocent of covering.

"Well I declare!" exclaimed the lady, transfixed, looking at him in blank surprise.

"What is it, ma'am?"

"Why, if you ain't bald yourself!"

Proprietor was about to rejoin, but the lady continued:

"I don't want your hair tonic now."

Proprietor attempted to explain, but the lady wouldn't listen. She couldn't be made to believe that a man could make a preparation to restore other people's hair, and remain bald himself.

The moral is, when bald people sell hair tonic they should keep their hair on.

NOT THE FIRST TIME.—In one of the recent repulses of the Federals, we read that "they retreated to Liberty." This is no new movement, for ever since the war began, we must say that all their steps have been backward ones in that direction. Of course they took possession of the town, for we all know what capital good hands the Yankees are in taking a Liberty.—*Punch*.

AN HERCULEAN FEAT.—On Tuesday it was announced in the Admiralty Court that the Great Eastern had been arrested by the Marshal (Mr. Jones) on a claim of £6,000 for damages done by her in a collision with the Jane. We should think Mr. Jones must be a relative of Davy Jones—at all events he must be a very great man to be able to "take up" the Great Eastern with such ease.—*Fun*.

THE CABINET COUNCIL AND THE CONGRESS.—The following verbatim report (furnished by our Usual Traitor) will probably be read with considerable interest.

Pam.—I only say that the move is a bold and a clever one. I don't say it will succeed. I don't say it was even meant to succeed. I only say that our august friend over the water has again shown pluck and talent.

Russell.—What is "pluck?"

Pam.—It's nothing to do with you, John! Gentlemen who commence a dispute after saying they won't fight, are generally considered not to possess much of it.

Russell.—Oh; yes. I am much obliged. You are very satirical. Yes.

Pam.—The really important question is what answer we shall send. Our friend across the channel has a strong passion for intelligibility. What shall we do, eh?

Russell.—I should say, let us rest and be thankful. (Goes to sleep.)

Gladstone.—For what?

Granville.—Would it not be an excellent idea to ask the Emperor over here, and give him a nice little dinner? No sovereign is really insensible to such delicate attentions.

Pam.—What shall we do, Gladstone?

Gladstone.—We have three courses open to us.

Pam.—Yes, I know; but which of the three shall we take?

Sir Charles Wood (still thinking of Lord Granville's proposition).—Do you think three courses would do?

There's soup, you know; and I suppose he'd like some fish; and—

Sir George Grey (sharply).—Don't expose yourself in that manner, Charles! Hold your tongue; and you'll almost pass for a statesman. And it's most necessary that you should, considering that you married into our family, and have been allowed to govern an Indian Empire in consequence?

Pam.—Gentlemen, these family disputes waste time. Would the Lord Chancellor suggest any definite course?

Lord Chancellor.—I should keep on writing him letters until I tired him out!

Gladstone.—Three letters would be best.

Russell (talking in his sleep).—I once wrote a letter to the Bishop of Durham. I forget what it was all about. I forget most things. I must remember, though, to ask Palmerston for a diplomatic appointment. There's another Elliot to be provided for. Yes. Magna Charta. The late Mr. Burke. Rest and be thankful.

Sir Charles Wood (pinching Earl Russell).—Come, John, you must wake up. We all look to you, you know, like Poles to the Needles. You're the head of our set.

Russell (waking).—I should write something insulting to everybody, and tell 'em that I wouldn't fight. The English always like a display of pluck.

Wood, Grey and other old Whigs.—Capital, John! capital.

Pam.—Well, suppose we adjourn the question?

The Majority.—Yes; certainly; adjourn everything. Good-day.

(Exeunt; as Mr. Gladstone is about to retire, the Premier stops him.)

Pam.—No, not you! Do stop, Gladstone. The matter really isn't a joke. And it certainly is rather hard upon a man of my age that he has to conduct the government of England with only one minister in his cabinet whose advice is worth a rap.

Earl Russell (re-entering).—By-the-bye, I forgot. I

must really, on behalf of the party that I represent, insist upon the summary dismissal of Lord Lyons.

Pam.—The dismissal of Lord Lyons! Why?

Russell.—I want his berth for a young friend of mine. Don't suppose you've heard his name before. It's Elliot.

(Scene closes: the reply of the Premier not being exactly adapted for publication.)

A MUSIC-MAD KING.—The ears of the King of Prussia are too generally compared to those of Midas. King William has a fine sense of music; indeed, his mind is much too musical for a constitutional sovereign. Nature meant him for an absolute maestro. This is clear from the way in which he treats his Parliament. He expects it simply to echo his decrees. The truth is, that the legislative body which his Prussian Majesty wants is not a Parliament, but a chorus.—*Punch*.

FATHER MATHEW presented Lord Brougham with a temperance medal and ribbon. His lordship said he would take it to the House where he should be sure to meet old Lord—the worse for liquor. Lord Brougham was as good as his word; for, on meeting the veteran peer who was so celebrated for his potations, he said: "Lord—, I have a present from Father Mathew for you," and passed the ribbon rapidly over his neck. "Then I tell you what it is, Brougham; by—! I will keep sober for this night," said his lordship, who kept his vow, to the great amazement of his friends.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

A PINT of milk is said to be a remedy for poisoning by eating mussels. Stimulants are to be taken an hour after the milk.

EXTRACT OF LOGWOOD A DEODORIZER AND DISINFECTANT.—M. T. P. Desmarteis in *Comptes-Rendus*, relates that he has employed an ointment composed of equal parts of lard and extract of logwood with extraordinary success in removing fetid odours and bringing about a healthy action in sloughing and gangrenous wounds.

STATISTICS.

THERE is rather a mysterious difference, which requires the keen eye of Mr. Gladstone, between the returns of the Income and Property Tax. The whole yield of the Income and Property Tax last year was £10,482,583; of the Land Tax (intended to be four shillings in the pound on the real annual value) only £1,106,353.

THE WAR appears to be costing the American Government about £150,000,000 a year; at least, the official statement of the indebtedness of the Union on 1st May, 1863, was 964,000,000 dollars, and is for 1st September 1,228,000,000 dollars, an increase of £13,200,000 a month. This includes every liability except unpaid bills. Taking the dollar at a fifth of a pound, which is very nearly its value, the debt is now (November 1st) £260,000,000, and the liabilities, perhaps, £40,000,000 more, or £300,000,000 in all. By this time next year it will be £450,000,000, bearing an average interest of a little less than 5 per cent. per annum.

ROYAL FORESTS.—The Commissioners of Woods and Forests have made the following report of the receipts and expenditure in respect of the Royal forests and woodlands in the year ending March, 1863:—1. Windsor parks and woods—receipt, 7,260*l*; expenditure, 18,602*l*. 2. New Forest—receipt, 19,408*l*; expenditure, 13,982*l*. 3. Dean Forest (exclusive of mines)—receipt, 12,286*l*; expenditure, 9,932*l*. 4. High Meadow Woods, Gloucestershire—receipt, 9,103*l*; expenditure, 2,745*l*. 5. Alton Holt Woods, Hants—receipt, 6,634*l*; expenditure, 896*l*. 6. Woolmer Estate, Hants—receipt, 1,293*l*; expenditure, 276*l*. 7. Bere Woods, Hants—receipt, 2,484*l*; expenditure, 884*l*. 8. Parkhurst Woods—receipt, 305*l*; expenditure, 500*l*. 9. Hazleborough Wood, Northamptonshire—receipt, 922*l*; expenditure, 382*l*. 10. Salcey Wood, Northamptonshire—receipt, 1,777*l*; expenditure, 969*l*. 11. Delamere Woods, Cheshire—receipt, 974*l*; expenditure, 1,018*l*. 12. Epping Forest—receipt, nil; expenditure, 50*l*. 13. Choppwell Woods, Durham (exclusive of mines, which produced 50*l*.)—receipt, 27*l*; expenditure, 454*l*. This is but a sorry account—receipts, 56,497*l*; expenditure, 50,090*l*. Of the expenditure 8,613*l* went in planting, new works, and improvements; all the rest was for maintenance and general management.

BURNING FERN BRINGS RAIN.—In a volume containing a miscellaneous collection by Dr. Richard Pococke, in the British Museum (Add. 15,801, at fol. 83), is the copy of a letter written by Philip Herbert, third Earl of Pembroke, Lord Chamberlain,

to the Sheriff of Staffordshire, which illustrates a curious popular belief of the period, from which even the king was not free. It is as follows:—"Sir,—His Majesty taking notice of an opinion entertained in Staffordshire that the burning of ferns doth draw down rain, and being desirous that the country and himself may enjoy fair weather as long as he remains in those parts, his Majesty has commanded me to write to you to cause all burning of ferns to be forborne until his Majesty be passed the country. Wherein not doubting but the consideration of their own interest as well as of his Majesty's, will invite the country to a ready observance of this his Majesty's command, I rest, your very loving friend, PEMBROKE AND MONTGOMERY."

A DIGRESSIVE ESSAY ON WILLS.

A DYING miser sent for his solicitor, and, being propped up in bed, said:

"Now begin, and I will dictate particulars."

"I give and I bequeath," commenced the man of law, repeating, as he wrote down the formula.

"No, no," interrupted the testator; "I do nothing of the kind; I will never give or bequeath anything; I cannot do it."

"Well, then," suggested the attorney, after some consideration as to how the usual style could be modified, "suppose you say, 'I lend, until the last day?'"

"Yes, yes, that will do," eagerly rejoined his employer; and so they got on with the business in hand.

Testamentary bequests are of very ancient date. They commenced with the Egyptians and early Hebrews. Some profound scholars fancy they can find a direct will in the family arrangements made by Jacob or Israel, as related in the forty-eighth chapter of Genesis, where he prefers Ephraim to Manasseh, in the order of succession. This seems to us rather a strained, if not altogether an inadmissible interpretation. It amounts certainly to another instance of setting aside the ordinary law of primogeniture, so frequently commanded or permitted in scriptural records.

Solon introduced wills at Athens, 578 B.C. The Romans adopted the practice from the Greeks. There are many regulations respecting wills in the Koran. Cortes found them in use with the native Mexicans, who could not have derived the custom from any European source. Trebatius Testa, an eminent jurist-consult of his day, was the first who introduced codicils to wills at Rome, 31 B.C. He wrote books on religious ceremonies, as well as treatises on civil law, as we learn from Cicero; and Horace names him as a poet of more than average pretensions.

Roman wills were sealed by seals, applied after they had pierced the deeds, and had passed the linen envelope three times through the holes, a method established in the time of Nero, as a security against forgers, and adopted in Germany and Gaul, where it continued until the middle ages. Outside the will were written the names of those who had affixed their seals. Upon the first page were entered the names of the principal heirs; upon the second, or right-hand tablet, those of the legatees. To this Horace alludes. The Greek wills were signed and sealed in the presence of the magistrate.

EGGS IMPORTED.—Two hundred and thirteen millions of eggs have been brought into this country in the nine months terminated on the 30th September this year, against one hundred and seventy-seven millions in the corresponding period of last year. By the end of the year, according to a fair estimate, the supplies will have reached two hundred and seventy-five millions, a number 250 per cent. in advance of the importations in 1882, when only 108½ millions were entered at the various custom-houses of the United Kingdom.

THE RUSSIANS are actively preparing for war. The armour-plated frigate *Sebastopol* has just been launched at Cronstadt with success. She is to carry engines of 1,000 horse power, and will be armed with 38 rifled guns. The *Sebastopol* is covered with iron plates throughout. On the stocks from which she has just been launched, another vessel of the same rank, to be called the Emperor Nicholas, is about to be laid down, and will, it is expected, be ready for launching in the spring. All this has been done with English iron-plates. It is a question how far we should back the exertions of our foes.

THE CORRECTIONAL TRIBUNAL of St. Etienne (Loire) has just been engaged two days in trying nine persons employed on the St. Etienne to Roanne Railway, charged with having through their negligence caused the fatal accident at La Fouilleuse, on the 24th of August last, by which four persons were killed and nine others more or less seriously injured. Twenty-four witnesses were examined for the prosecution, and twelve for the defence. The defendants pleaded that they had acted in accordance with the regulations, and had not been guilty of any neglect. This

plea, however, was not supported by the evidence, for the tribunal declared the charges proved against them all, and condemned M. St. Martin, deputy station-master at St. Etienne, to fifteen months' imprisonment, and 1,000fr. fine; Tailland, station-master at Villars, to a year's imprisonment and 500fr. fine; Barbet, train-conductor, Favre, engine-driver, and Mitaine, stoker, each to six months' imprisonment and 500fr. fine; and the four other defendants, all gate-keepers, each to fifteen days' imprisonment and 50fr. fine.

QUICK WORK.—A firm of biscuit manufacturers in Carlisle, by way of showing what could be done by rapid work, recently had a field of wheat reaped; the grain thrashed and ground, and the flour made into biscuits, which were served hot on the breakfast-table at eight o'clock, in exactly four hours from the time the sickle was first put into the standing grain.

THE OLD STONE WELL. BY DALTON STONE.

THESE sunny eves that summer crown,
I wander through the clover lea,
Stirring the tufts of thistle-down,
To float away in wanderings free;
I trample past those circles green,
That show us near the faries dwell;
Clover and daisies stroll between,
Until I reach the old stone well.

Where, overhead, the woodbine twines—
A thickly-matted leafy roof;
And in between the wild hop vines,
Make with their web a rustic roof.

A grassy bank's the only seat
That nature's given to this dell;
And a large stone for weary feet
Lying beside the old stone well,

Whose mossy mouth looks sweetly cool,
Fringed with the blue forget-me-not,
Though yonder green and stagnant pool
Seems in the sunset, seething hot.
Here, all around the tangled plants,
Combine to shade this verdant cell,
Though now and then a sunbeam slants
Between the leaves into the well.

Here, in the cool of summer eve,
After the turmoil of the day,
I come, my fancy's web to weave,
And dream of fond ones far away.
Quenching my thirst in this still spot,
The tumult in my breast I quell;
The troubles of the day forgot,
I slumber by the old stone well.

GEMS.

THE firefly only shines when on the wing. So it is with the mind; when once we rest we darken.

DESPISE nothing because it is weak. The fly and the locust have done more hurt than ever the bears and lions did.

BUSY not thyself in searching into other men's lives; the errors of thine own are more than thou canst answer for. It more concerns thee to mend one fault in thyself, than to find out a thousand in others.

BEAUTIFUL ANSWERS.

What is gratitude?—Gratitude is the memory of the heart.

What is hope?—Hope is the blossom of happiness.

What is the difference between hope and desire?—Desire is the tree of life, hope is a tree in flower, and enjoyment is a tree in fruit.

What is eternity?—A day without yesterday or tomorrow—a line that has no end.

What is time?—A line that has two ends—a path which begins in the cradle and ends in the tomb.

What is God?—The necessary being, the sun of eternity, the soul of the world.

Does God reason?—Man reasons because he doubts; he deliberates—he decides. God is omniscient; He never doubts—He therefore, never reasons.

TRUE happiness is of a retired nature, and an enemy to pomp and noise: it arises, in the first place, from the enjoyment of one's self; and in the next, from the friendship and conversation of a few select companions.

Two things well considered, would prevent many quarrels; first, to have it well ascertained whether we are not disputing about terms rather than things; and secondly, to examine whether that, on which we differ, is worth contending about.

VEGETATION and anguish accompany riches and honour; the pomp of the world and the favour of the

people are but smoke suddenly vanishing, which, if they comethly please, commonly bring repentance: and for a moment of joy, they bring an age of sorrow.

WHEAT is not separated but by threshing, nor men from worldly impediments but by tribulation.

EVERY young man should remember that the world will always honour industry. The vulgar and useless idler, whose energies of body and mind are rusting for want of occupation, may look with scorn upon the labourer engaged at his toil; but his scorn is praise, his contempt honour.

MISCELLANEOUS.

OF known languages and dialects 143 belong to Asia; 53 to Europe; 115 to Africa; 117 to Oceania; and 422 to America.

WILD ducks are estimated to fly 90 miles an hour; swallows fly rather faster; and the swift flies above 200 miles an hour.

THE Brighton Railway traffic return shows this week a decrease of £2,336 compared with last year, and the South-Eastern a decrease of £1,555.

BLONDIX, when he risked his neck on the high rope, had £100 an exhibition; for the low rope he receives but £20.

It is rumoured that Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton has written for Mr. Fechter a play, with which that illustrious actor is dissatisfied, and that Mr. Tom Taylor is therefore hard at work upon one.

THE field of the first Bull Run battle is thickly strewn with flowers, which spring up from the midst of the mouldering and rusting medley of that day's horrors.

FOLKESTONE has now the peculiar distinction of being represented by a Roman Catholic in her Protestant parish church, by a Jew in Parliament, and by a Frenchman as chief magistrate.

THE MEDICAL STAFF OF ENGLAND.—From the last census it appears that there are, in England and Wales, one surgeon or general practitioner to about 1,712 of the population, one physician to 3,562, and one dentist to 3,503.

A FARMER has been sentenced to death in France for murdering his mother and two brothers. He got into financial difficulties, forged the signature of one of his brothers, shot his mother and brothers, and then set fire to the house.

A BRITISH officer died suddenly, one day recently, on board of an English vessel, lying in the port of New York. A post-mortem examination revealed the fact that he died from the effects of a bullet wound in the region of the heart, that he received several years ago, during the Russian war.

A FRENCH landowner to all appearances died suddenly, a few days ago, and was taken to the church for interment. As the service was proceeding noises were heard proceeding from the coffin, the lid was taken off, and the man was found to be alive. On the following day he was able to move about.

A MR. FORSTER, of Derby, has attained the age of 101 years. In early life, Mr. Forster served in the army, and went to Egypt under General Abercrombie. He afterwards became an artist. He has been four times married, and has a daughter now living in her eleventh year, she having been born when her father was ninety years of age.

A DR. WRIGHT was recently hung in America for shooting a Federal. He had previously attempted to escape by dressing himself in his daughter's clothes. The doctor had his coffin made after a peculiar pattern designed by himself—the top end was raised so as to form a chamber over the face ten inches high, and on the inner sides he fastened the photographs of all his family. His daughter was married in his cell.

THE next transit of Venus, will take place in 1874, and the next afterwards in 1882. There will be great preparations to take observations in all parts of the world, and it is expected that the sun will be found to be four million miles nearer to the earth than was supposed.

WHEN the Africa ran ashore off Cape Race, the self-possession of the men, and especially of the women, was remarkable. It is a singular fact that the greatest degree of trepidation was exhibited by the clergy. One poor priest, denuded of all covering except a scarlet cap and day shirt, paraded through the ladies' cabin, crying, at the top of his voice, "Sisters, come and confess." The figure he cut was so ridiculous that many a smile was visible and hearty laugh heard in the very presence of, death itself. Captain Stone was throughout as calm, to all appearances, as if sailing on an undisturbed sea of a calm summer evening, and gave his orders with perfect composure.

BOOK RECEIVED.

Poems by Dalton Stone, F. Pitman, Paternoster Row.—The subjects chosen to be handled poetically in this little volume have much of poetry in themselves, and are well calculated to attract a muse, which, although marked by considerable sweetness, is not characterized by much strength. "My Childhood's Home," "The Old Stone Well," "Our Garden Gate," "Under the Great Elm Tree," "Through the Meadows," and other kindred subjects, are certainly suggestive of poetic sentiment of a certain kind, and when agreeably treated must produce pleasing emotions in the mind of any reader whose sympathies claim some association with such objects as help to make up the picturesque in rural scenery. In this volume the originality is not great, but many of the verses are sweet and rhythmic.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

SUFFERER.—We think not; at least we know of none.
R. J. L.—For the removal of pimples, see page 64, in an answer to S. J. ROBERTS.

CLARA and KATE will be happy to hear again from **WHENLOCK and HORATIO**.

C. S. H.—Apply to the parish authorities.

JANE.—Very likely he would adopt that title, but he would not be forced to do so.

STELLA R.—Immerse them in a weak solution of hydrochloric acid (spirits of salt). In many cases, however, washing them in soap and water will answer the purpose.

C. WOODKES.—Some of the verses of your friend evince the germs of poetical talent, but they require cultivation. Let him try again.

CAROLINE (Lp.).—Your verses are very good, but scarcely up to the mark of *The Reader*. In the last three stanzas, try again.

RICHARDSON A.—Without considerable influence, neither of the situations to which you refer could easily be obtained. Your writing is good enough for a merchant's office.

JOHN SHADOW.—Your writing is good enough to justify application anywhere for a situation, although it is still capable of improvement.

A. CONSTANT READER.—There is no prescription of which we are aware that will make a moustache grow, if the germ of it is not there. Try daily shaving.

CLIQUE.—MSS. should be written on ruled white paper, with the best black ink. The writing cannot be too plain, and the slips of paper should not be more than about four inches wide, and written only on one side.

MADAME DUTCH.—Wash it in cold water and dry it at the fire, at the same time rubbing it with a warm towel. The curling-tongs, however, are the most certain instruments for the attainment of your object. For curling fluids, see page 872, in an answer to **FERONIA**.

R. B. C. BUCKER would be happy to correspond with J. M. She is twenty-four years of age, tall and fair; has a happy disposition, a loving heart, and would like one in return. She is of respectable family, and holds a respectable situation under Government. She does not want any one with money, as she has none herself, but a respectable young man.

P. N. is eighteen years of age, with fair complexion, black eyes, and nice color. She has also a nice set of teeth, and is altogether considered good-looking and very prepossessing. She is of medium height, and, to crown all, has a loving heart. P. N. will take it as a great favour if J. M. would kindly answer this.

T. N. V.—We think there must be some inaccuracy in the measurement. In a note to *Froude's History of England*, we find it stated that few living men could send the lightest arrow two hundred and twenty yards, even with the greatest elevation, and for effective use it must be delivered nearly point blank.

ELISA.—Reduce your expenditure. We are ruined not by what we really want, but by what we think we do; therefore, never go abroad in search of your wants; if they are real wants, they will come home in search of you; for the lady that buys what she does not want will soon want what she cannot buy.

A YOUTH.—The ship-worm is usually about a foot long, and sometimes two and a half feet. It destroys soft wood rapidly, and even teak and oak do not escape its ravages. It always bores in the direction of the grain, unless it meets the ribs of another *Teredos* as it is scientifically called, or a knot of timber. Metal sheathing and broad-headed iron nails have been found most effectual in protecting piers and ship-timbers.

STANTON.—Take three-pennyworth of nitrate of silver and dilute it in about two table-spoonfuls of water. Wash your hair with this, by means of a toothbrush, perfectly clean, taking care not to touch the skin. When this is dry, proceed in the same way with ammonia, which will fix the nitrate of silver, and your hair will be changed to a brown or a black, in accordance with the strength of the nitrate. Your hair must first be washed free from oil or grease of every description. The writing is very good.

CLARA.—When he disappoints you, it may proceed from necessity; but if it proceeds from carelessness, coldness, or neglect, we do not believe that his affection is likely to be either very strong or very lasting. Ellen had better sound her young gentleman as to his intentions. If she does not like to do this herself, let her get some other person superior to her in years, to do it, and then she will be better able to determine how to set. Your writing is plain enough, and practice will improve it.

D. L. R.—If a testator desires to leave legacies to charities, he must take special care to charge them on his personal estate only. A bequest to a charity of leasehold property, or of money to arise from the sale of land, or a bequest of money to be laid out in the purchase of land, or such a bequest secured by mortgage, or a bequest of a rent-charge on land, or a bequest to pay off mortgages on charities, or a bequest of money secured on parol or county rates, or turnpike tolls—has been held, in each case, to be null and void. We may add, that under the act to restrain accumulations, no person can dispose by will of any real or personal estate

in such manner as that the rents or products thereof shall be accumulated for any longer period than a life or lives in being at the death of the testator, and twenty-one years afterwards.

F. G. B. HAWLEY.—The work is not yet completed.

G. E.—After such questionable conduct, you would do a great wrong to yourself to marry such a person.

Y. M.—Make your parents acquainted with all the circumstances.

S. W.—Taken as a nation, the Welsh are the most sober people in the world.

BOW.—The Americans declared themselves independent in 1776. Their independence was acknowledged by England in 1783.

R. C. must change her residence. She is evidently suffering from a morbid state of mind. Change of scene will bring about a cure.

D. W. must consult a respectable solicitor. It is always safer and more economical, in cases involving perplexing embarrassments, to obtain the best legal advice at once.

H. S.—When co-heirs disagree as to the disposal of the property, the only remedy is an appeal to the Court of Chancery.

R. D.—An apprentice is obliged to remain in his master's employ in whatever place the business may be carried on. The boy is bound to the master, not the locality.

EDWIN.—The estimated cost of the board and lodging of a man-servant in an English gentleman's family is now about £25 a year.

G. D.—The population of Austria is estimated at twelve millions, and that of Prussia at ten millions five hundred thousand.

P. DAVIS.—Yes. All diseases from drinking spirituous or fermented liquors are liable to become hereditary, even to the third generation, and gradually to increase, if the course be continued, till the family becomes extinct.

A YOUTH.—True politeness is the legitimate result of two things—good nature and good sense. It is, therefore, wholly distinct from any factitious circumstance of birth, education, wealth or talent.

MAT.—Children may be humoured without being spoiled. Their young affections should not be trampled in the dust of unkindness. An equable demeanour is the one best adapted to hold in control the varying, April-like tempers of children.

A. ROBERTSON.—At present the decay of a town implies the decay of the trade of the town; and the decay of all towns simultaneously would imply a general collapse of the trade of the whole country.

A. L.—In 1546, a French army, of sixty thousand men, did attempt to effect a landing at St. Helen's, but they were defeated and driven off by the militia of the island, and a few levies transported from Hampshire and the adjoining counties.

LUCY GRAHAM.—We think not. It is steadfastly maintained by Professor Owen, that the "unity of organization," manifested by the animal world, results from the design of a Supreme Intelligence, and cannot be ascribed to the operation of a mechanical law.

M. N.—When young ladies and gentlemen differ, the etiquette is for the gentlemen to first make overtures towards effecting a reconciliation; but a kind word and a smiling look from the fair ones themselves are never thrown away—they thaw the ice with magical rapidity.

P. O. D.—It is difficult to advise; but in making choice of a wife for ourselves, we should prefer the person to the money, virtue to beauty, and the mind to the body. In such a choice we should expect to find a wife, a friend and a companion who would willingly bear an equal share of all our joys and afflictions.

J. E.—A generous old gentleman who lived in the times when good beer was brewed in England, left a sum of money to provide a drink of genuine ale at the Hospital of Saint Cross, near Winchester, for all comers, in perpetuity. What the article distributed now may be, we do not know; but some years ago we tasted it, and found it very poor vinegar—very poor, indeed. But all such charities should be abolished, they do no good.

G. FRASER.—There is a great deal of truth in what you say, for most people overdo either the active or the contemplative part of life. To be continually immersed in business is the way to become forgetful of everything truly noble and liberal. To be wholly engaged in study is to lose a great part of the usefulness of a social nature. It would certainly, as you say, be much better if people would temper action with contemplation, and use it as a relief to study.

LILLIA.—We are sorry for Lillia. Does love exist? Ask your own heart. Count its flutterings, when touched by anguish or quickened by kindness—look into the depths of the eyes of a parent or a husband, as he gazes in thrilling emotion on the object of an affection rooted in his soul, like a spirit-oak defying every blast, towering over time and change, and every adverse circumstance. Does love exist? Lillia must forgive us when we say she asks an idle question. The world, without love, would be a wilderness overrun by weeds and wastes, and inhabited only by the brute creation.

A. M. S.—You ask "whether you should cultivate your poetical faculties, believing yourself endowed with them, or whether you should adhere to the practical duties of life in which you have been reared." Our answer is to stick to the latter, and in this opinion we are happily supported by what Lord Houghton (Mr. Monckton Milnes) has just said in his address to the Philosophical Institution at Edinburgh. "I will take the liberty," says he, "to give two pieces of advice. My first counsel is to any man who believes himself endowed with the poetical faculty. As he values the existence and the development of his powers, and the welfare of the mind that possesses them, let him, at all personal risk and self-sacrifice, refuse to make them the ministers of his material rights, the means of his daily subsistence. Spend your last shilling, if your poetic soul so blinds you, in giving your poems to an ungrateful public. My other admonition is to the practical man. Let him not be too proud of his practice, nor too self-satisfied of his immunity from imagination. Let him beware of too much thankfulness that he is not even as that poet. How they sometimes fall in the most important juncture of their lives, by some

visionary scheme or some extravagant miscalculation!" Our lunatic asylums are full of these victims. If the poet's genius is so nearly allied to madness as has been written, he keeps wonderfully clear of the connection—perhaps from knowing a little more about it than others.

X. X.—*Peindre à fresque* signifies "to paint in fresco," that is, to produce a picture on fresh plaster.

D. D.—The most ancient specimens known of design in the art of painting are the famous Etruscan vases.

MARY is thirty years of age, about the middle height and good-looking; is well educated and respectably connected—wishes for a good husband.

D. C.—Try again; you are not the first man that has been ruined by speculation, and are not likely to the last. Be of good cheer, for a broken fortune is like a fallen column, the lower it sinks the greater weight it has to sustain. The very exertion of trying to get on again will relieve you of more than half your misery.

EMMA W. wishes to obtain a husband, who must have a handsome figure, and be well educated. She is 5 ft 5 in. in height, nineteen years of age, and very lively in disposition; fair complexioned, and by all her acquaintances considered very handsome; of superior education, and will become entitled to a fortune of £300 per annum from the time of her marriage.

A. RICHER.—A morganatic marriage is by no means uncommon among the families of sovereigns and the nobility Germany. It consists of a union between a man of superior and a woman of inferior rank, in which it is stipulated that the latter and her children, shall not enjoy the rank nor inherit the possessions of her husband.

A. LAXON.—In a 13-inch mortar of the old style, the calculation was that three pounds of powder gave a range of 1,100 yards; that every half-pound added increased the range by 100 yards, and for each half-pound taken away there was a decrease of 150 yards. The old 42-pounder, weighing 54 cwt., with a charge of 14 lb. of powder and 3½ degrees of elevation, has a range of 1,600 yards, and the 32-pounder, with 3½ degrees of elevation, has 1,550 yards of range.

T. ROBERTS.—Your safest and surest relief is in work. Keep yourself constantly employed, and your mooping will soon leave you. Work, and you will soon find your mind restored to health, your soul to cheerfulness, and your heart to independence. Work, and by-and-by, instead of repining at your fate, you will, in all probability, find yourself offering up thanks to Heaven for the numerous blessings you enjoy.

JESSICA.—We do not think that your theory regarding the eyes will hold good in all cases. If it did, it would be an exact index for the guidance of the judgment in forming its estimate of human character. We have heard it said that dark blue eyes are most common in persons of delicate, refined or effeminate nature; that light blue eyes, and much more blue eyes, in the hardy and active; whilst hazel eyes are the more usual indications of a mind masculine and vigorous. We do not, however, put much faith in these opinions.

BEATRICE CENCIL.—"As so many intimate their desire to get husbands through the medium of your paper, I think I will follow their example. If you will kindly insert a notice of my wants, I am between eighteen and nineteen years of age, am rather short and inclined to embonpoint; am neither handsome nor ugly, but have a very good-tempered look, and when in company am very ladylike. I have received a very good plain education; but am totally averse to dancing of any sort, although I can dance. I have no fortune at present, but may have little money some time. The reason why I write to you is not from a want of beauty, but because they are all so very conceited and such boys. I have been a regular subscriber to your entertaining paper ever since its commencement, and I like it very much."

RATCLIFF.—We can perceive no better remedy for young criminals than in sending them to reformatory schools, there keeping them until they are well trained to habits of industry and general good conduct, and then procuring them employment under watchful supervision; and as regards adult offenders, in sending them to prison, and there giving them a similar training, *en route* to the state of affairs afforded to their younger brethren. But as old ways of thinking and old habits are harder to change than those which are not inveterate, we would place them under the alternative of either remaining prisoners in perpetuity, or working themselves out of gaol by their merits. Thus we should bring to bear upon them the two motives of hope and fear, each urging them onwards in the course towards reformation, each motive existing in a state of great intensity. Those who have never been deprived of personal freedom can but feebly realize the pangs of incarceration; but those, when continued beyond a short period, are, to men of ordinary disposition, hardly to be endured. Some criminals, however, are so constituted as to resist the operation of both these motives. Probably, in their cases, the suffering caused by imprisonment is far less intense than with the majority of mankind.

RECEIVED.—Lines by Phoebe—Stanzas by Nanan—A. D. D. Owen—X. Y. Z. Juno—P. Jones—R. S. S.—A Prophet—P. Murdoch—Lizzie—Mathew Walker—A Geologist—E. Dring—S. Williams—Mary Johnson—R. R. R.—A. B. C. M. Thompson—Lucy Hay—D. Beale—Plato—J. L. Mountain—Daisy—Rosa—Hester Graham—P. Warwick—L. Riddle—S. Knowles—Storyteller—D. McPherson—Ann—F. Abbott—Ellen—Belle—Maudie—The Last Rose of Summer—A. Crafter—T. Langbourne—Bachelor—Glenroy—F. Donaldson—Lady Jane Grey—Sprite—A. Thomas—George Merry—Emma Staunton—Alice and Bee—Chloe Harold.

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